Problems of COMMUNISM

The Fruits of the Thaw

Outlook for Revisionism

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BERNARD CAZES

Economic Change in Poland

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EASTERN EUROPE

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The Fruits of the Thaw

EDITORS' NOTE: Four years have elapsed since Nikita S. Khrushchev delivered his well publicized "secret speech" at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, setting off a chain of political explosions that shook the Communist world and culminated in the Polish "October" and the Hungarian Revolution. What is there left of the intellectual fire and moral indignation that gave rise to these events? What are the lasting accomplishments of the era of the "thaw"? What has become of the promise of revisionism? These are some of the questions examined from different vantage points in the following series of articles. In the first two contributions, Mr. Griffith analyzes the roots of intellectual revisionism and its current political role, while Mr. Cazes discusses the progress, as well as the possible limitations, of the evolution of economic thought in the Soviet empire. Mr. Montias examines the accomplishments and failures of the post-1956 Polish economy, and in his report on contemporary Hungary, Mr. Ignotus writes of the muted contest that continues there between the rulers and the ruled.

What Happened to Revisionism?

By William E. Griffith

DURING THE PERIOD OF ideological ferment in Eastern Europe leading up to the late 1956 upheavals in Poland and Hungary, observers in the West became keenly aware of the vital role being played in these developments by the growing numbers of Communist intellectuals who for the first time were daring to speak out against the oppressive and irrational features of Stalinist totalitarianism, and even to challenge certain aspects of hallowed party dogma. The events of the "Polish October" underlined this role still further, and despite the tragically different outcome of the revolt in Hungary, revisionism—as these tendencies have since come to be known—continued to be widely regarded as a force which might vitally influence future developments in the Communist world. To many left-wing Western intellectuals, revisionism appeared to hold the promise of an enduring, "genuinely socialist" and humanitarian "third force".[1] On the other hand, those antagonistic to Marxism in any form saw in it primarily a disintegrative force which might divide and weaken the Communist movement everywhere.

Neither of these hopes, obviously, has been borne out by the developments of the last three years. As the author was able to verify for himself during a tour of Eastern Europe last summer, revisionism has now

Mr. Griffith, formerly Political Advisor of Radio Free Europe, Munich, is now associated with the Center of International Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, Mass. His article is drawn from a book on the "thaw" in Eastern Europe, now under preparation.

[1] These hopes were perhaps best expressed in Jean-Paul Sartre's preface to the special issue of his magazine devoted to the Hungarian thaw and uprising. *Les Temps Modernes,* Vol. XII, Nos. 129, 130, 131 (November, December 1956 and January 1957), pp. 577-696.

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ceased to be an effective force in the political life of any East European country, not excluding Poland where its influence had been stronger and more persistent than anywhere else in the Soviet orbit. In the Soviet Union itself, revisionist tendencies have been effectively smothered by Khrushchev's double-barreled policies of continued control over intellectual life and economic concessions to the population; and in Communist China, such revisionist currents as emerged in the brief period of Mao's "Hundred Flowers" policy have long since been suppressed in the subsequent campaigns against "rightist deviation."[2] Nor has revisionism fared much better even in the West, where its advocates have for the most part quit, or been purged from, the Communist Party organizations without being able to exert any significant degree of influence on the democratic socialist parties of the Left, with the single exception of Nenni's Socialist Party in Italy.

The causes of this universal decline of revisionist influence are a great deal more complex than might appear at first glance. Certainly, the measures which have been taken by all the Communist bloc regimes since 1957 to retighten ideological controls and curb the public expression of revisionist views have been one major cause—and no doubt the one most directly responsible for forcing revisionism beneath the surface. However, in the author's view, another and perhaps more significant cause lies in the fact that, in Eastern Europe certainly and probably elsewhere as well, many if not most revisionists themselves have come to the conclusion that revisionism, insofar as it postulates reform within the Marxist-Leninist framework, offers little hope of genuine liberalization.

Revisionism Redefined

Before examining these causes in greater detail, however, it is essential to redefine what revisionism actually stood for in the East European context in which it originated. This is of primary importance because of the confusion sown by the exaggerations and distortions of the protracted propaganda campaign against revisionism carried on throughout the Sino-Soviet orbit during 1957-58. The campaign so extended the meaning of revisionism as to embrace virtually any tendency which Moscow and/or Peking considered dangerous. In particular, after the new breach in bloc relations with Tito, the campaign sought to picture "Yugoslav revisionism" as the moving spirit of the whole revisionist conspiracy against Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy.

As it emerged in Eastern Europe after the advent of the post-Stalin political "thaw", revisionism was essentially an effort by party intellectuals to bring about the correction of certain recognized evils in Communist society through a critical reevaluation and reinterpretation of party dogma. It sought to revitalize Marxism-Leninism by restoring to it some of Marxism's earlier qualities of idealism, notably its emphasis on humanistic values, genuine internationalism, and advancement of the general welfare of mankind.

Revisionism derived its initial impetus from growing intellectual disillusionment—especially among the younger intellectuals, many of whom had supported Stalinism—with the practical consequences of Stalinist rule: the complete suppression of individual liberties and cultural freedom of expression, widespread economic suffering, and the reign of police terror. The first manifestations in 1955 were largely confined to protests against rigid party controls over cultural activity, but following Khrushchev's revelation of Stalin's crimes at the 20th CPSU Congress, the revolt rapidly spread into the areas of politics, economics, and party ideology.[3] Refusing to accept the Soviet explanation of Stalin's crimes as merely the result of "the cult of personality," the revisionists saw the deeper causes of Stalinist misrule in defects inherent in the Communist system itself, and this in turn led them to challenge the validity of certain basic principles first of Stalinist, then of Leninist, and finally—in some cases—even Marxist dogma. While it embraced varying shades and degrees of opinion,[4] revisionist thinking on the main points at issue may be briefly summarized as follows:

1). In regard to the position of the Soviet Union and CPSU vis-à-vis other Communist states and parties, the revisionists generally rejected the Stalinist interpretation of "proletarian internationalism" which required the complete subordination of the orbit regimes to "the leading role of the Soviet Union." Instead, they insisted that intra-bloc relations be based on genuine national and party equality. It was this revisionist principle which the Soviet Union opposed most inflexibly, and which—in the extreme form it took in

[2] Shau Wing Chan, "Literature in Communist China," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 44-51; Merle R. Goldman, "Re-educating the Literati," *Soviet Survey,* No. 28, April-June 1959, pp. 25-29. See also *Saturn, passim,* and Michael Walzer, "When the Hundred Flowers Withered," *Dissent,* Vol. V, No. 4, pp. 360-73.

[3] The best overall account of the intellectual thaw in post-Stalin Eastern Europe is Heinz Kersten, *Aufstand der Intellektuellen,* Seewald, Stuttgart, 1957. See also footnote 13 below for further references.

[4] Cf. Donald F. Zagoria, "The Spectre of Revisionism," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VII, No. 4, pp. 15-21; also Leopold Labedz, "The Shadow of Revisionism," *Soviet Survey,* No. 24, April-June 1958, pp. 3-6.

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Hungary—led to Soviet armed intervention. Revisionism also stressed the principle of "separate roads to socialism," which had already received official Soviet recognition in the June 1955 Khrushchev-Tito joint declaration and again in Khrushchev's official 20th Congress report.

2). In the crucial area of political doctrine, the revisionists strongly opposed the narrow Leninist-Stalinist concept of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" on the ground that it meant, in effect, absolute party dictatorship and inevitably led to "bureaucratism" and "state capitalism." To forestall a recurrence of these dangers, they urged the establishment of a dual system of institutional safeguards against over-concentration of power: on the one hand, genuine democratization of the inner-party structure, procedures, and rules of discipline; and, on the other, external checks upon the party's power in the form of a more independent and authoritative role for parliament and—in the more radical forms of revisionism—the institution of a limited multi-party system which would allow the independent political existence of other parties generally subscribing to socialist principles. Some extreme revisionists advocated the decidedly un-Leninist concept of the party's role as primarily that of political educator of the masses.

3). In the economic sphere, revisionism placed major emphasis on ending the rigid application of certain policies which, under Stalin, had acquired the force of economic doctrine: principally, forced collectivization of agriculture, the priority development of heavy industry at the expense of consumer needs, extreme centralization of economic authority, and severely exploitative labor practices. Instead, the revisionists stood for a gradualist approach to collectivization, greater emphasis on the production and distribution of consumer goods, economic decentralization, reduced capital investment programs, more rational and balanced planning, restoration of a free market in some sectors of the economy, lower production norms for workers, profit-sharing, and—above all—greater "economic democracy" through workers' councils functioning as organs of factory self-government.[5] Some of the more radical revisionists, however, went so far as to challenge fundamental Marxist theories regarding the evolution of capitalism (pauperization of the working class, etc.) and the ultimate necessity of its overthrow by proletarian revolution. Arguing that modern technology and industrial organization have tended to transform capitalist relations of production, they foresaw a progressive emancipation of the working class under capitalism and a gradual rapprochement between the capitalist and socialist systems of production and social organization, obviating the necessity of violent revolution.

4). Finally, in the intellectual and cultural sphere, revisionism stood for the complete sweeping away of Stalinist restrictions upon freedom of thought and expression, including restrictions upon the freedom to criticize and re-evaluate party ideology in the light of objective historical truth. It also called for a return to Marxist "humanism" and adherence to absolute standards of morality as an indispensable basis for preventing a recurrence of the flagrant abuses of power and mass crimes of the Stalinist era.[6]

THESE, THEN, were the main currents of revisionist thought which were steadily gaining strength in East European Communist ranks in the months leading up to the historic upheavals of October 1956. In Poland and Hungary, where the ferment of ideas was more pronounced and open than in the other East European satellites, revisionism became the intellectual spearhead of the forces of anti-Stalinist revolt and, as such, played a decisive part in bringing about the October explosions in both countries. In the end, however, the two revolts took drastically different turns. In Poland, the revisionists' strong support of Gomulka contributed importantly to his success in containing the "Polish October" within limits that would not invoke prompt Soviet reprisal or jeopardize continued Communist Party control. In

[5] On workers' councils, see Kazimierz Grzybowski, "Workers' Councils in Poland," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VI, No. 4, pp. 16-19; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* 2nd ed., Meridian, New York, 1958, pp. 497-501; Oskar Anweiler, "Die Arbeiterselbstverwaltung in Polen," *Osteuropa,* Vol. VIII, No. 4, pp. 224-32 and "Die Räte in der Ungarischen Revolution, 1956," *ibid.,* Vol. VI, No. 6, pp. 393-400; Wolfgang Eggers, "Das System der Arbeiterräte im kommunistischen Bereich," *Osteuropa Wirtschaft,* Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 81-94. For post-1956 Polish economic developments, see "Poland's Economy," *East Europe,* Vol. VIII, No. 6, pp. 3-11; Alexander Erlich, "The Polish Economy after October 1956; Background and Outlook," *American Economic Review,* Vol. XLIX, No. 2, pp. 94-112.

[6] It was revulsion against the crimes and inhumanities of Stalinist rule that imparted to revisionism its "dynamic of disillusionment," best reflected in revisionist literary writing. For Hungary, see *Les Temps Modernes, loc. cit.;* William Juhasz and Abraham Rothberg, ed., *Flashes in the Night,* Random House, New York, 1959; George Paloczi-Horvath, ed., *One Sentence on Tyranny: Hungarian Literary Gazette Anthology,* Waverly, London, 1957. For Poland, see *Les Temps Modernes,* Vol. XIII, Nos. 132-33, February and March 1957; Pawel Mayewski, ed., *The Broken Mirror,* Random House, New York, 1958. For a general collection, see Edmund Stillman, ed., *Bitter Harvest,* Praeger, New York, 1959; and for poetry, Robert Conquest, ed., *Back to Life,* Hutchinson, London, 1958.

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Hungary, on the other hand, revisionism was overwhelmed by the much stronger forces of aroused Hungarian nationalism and yearning for political liberty. Its inability to contain these forces resulted in the brutal tragedy of Soviet armed intervention.

The Anti-Revisionist Campaign

As a consequence of the Polish and Hungarian upheavals, and more particularly of the role played by revisionism, Soviet intra-bloc policy in 1957 was marked by a renewed insistence upon rigid ideological conformity. The new policy was given formal expression and binding force for the whole orbit by the Moscow 12-party declaration of November 1957, which designated revisionism as the "main danger" to world communism and thus sounded the signal for a bloc-wide anti-revisionist campaign.

The 12-party declaration, to which the Yugoslav Communists refused to subscribe, also marked a further step toward the new rupture in bloc relations with Tito, which finally took place following publication of the Yugoslav party's "Draft Program" of April 1958.[7] Although the contents of the program were in no way novel, Sino-Soviet propaganda promptly seized upon it as a pretext for casting Tito and the Yugoslav Communists in the role of arch-villains of the "revisionist" conspiracy. In fact, the real issues at stake between Moscow and Belgrade had far less to do with ideology than with state policy (in particular, Tito's refusal to align himself with the bloc); hence, the charge of "revisionism" was merely a convenient propaganda device to cover up the collapse of Khrushchev's reconciliation policy vis-à-vis Belgrade.[8] In any event, the effect of all this was to demonstrate that "revisionism" had become perverted into a propaganda catch-all for denouncing almost anything inimical to Sino-Soviet interests.

In its anti-Yugoslav phase, the bloc campaign against revisionism displayed striking variations in intensity. Communist China, perhaps inspired by resentment of Yugoslav influence in Asia, played a leading and extremely aggressive role from the outset,[9] although on balance it seems unlikely that Peking, rather than Moscow, was the decisive factor in the anti-Tito assault.[10] In Eastern Europe, Albania and Bulgaria, both with nationalistic grievances against Yugoslavia, were quick to join in the assault, and Czechoslovakia (which had never repudiated the Slansky trial) likewise took an active part.[11] Poland was the last member of the East European bloc to join the attack, and then only with obvious reluctance.[12]

Concurrently with the propaganda war against revisionism, the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe—again with variations in speed and intensity—moved to curb or eradicate revisionist influences by means of internal "administrative measures."[13] These naturally were applied most speedily by the Kadar regime in Hungary, where they also were most severe, reaching their climax in June 1958 with the "trial" and execution of ex-Premier Nagy and other leaders of the October 1956 revolt. (A notable feature of the trial was the virtual attempt to equate revisionism with "counter-revolutionary treason.") Of the other East European

[7] For text of the draft program, see Belgrade *Review of International Affairs,* June 1, 1958. The final version is given in *Yugoslavia's Way,* trans. by Stoyan Pribichevitch, All Nations Press, New York, 1959. The first Soviet attack on the draft program appeared in *Kommunist,* No. 6, passed for publication April 19, 1958.

[8] Cf. Viktor Meyer, "Tito bleibt eigensinnig," *Forum,* Vol. VI, No. 67/68, July-August 1959, pp. 254-6. See also Richard Lowenthal, "Nach Titos Abenteuer: Aufs richtige Pferd gesetzt —und doch verloren!" *Der Monat,* Vol. XI, No. 121, October 1958, pp. 3-15; and Seweryn Bialer, "Moscow vs. Belgrade: A Key to Soviet Policy," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VII, No. 4, pp. 1-8.

[9] *E.g.,* Hu Chi-pang, "Yugoslav Revisionism Viewed Through the Case of the Counterrevolutionary Nagy," *Jen-min jih-pao,* Peking, June 18, 1958; "Modern Revisionism Must be Criticized," *ibid.,* May 5, 1958; Ch'en Po-ta, "Yugoslav Revisionism —Product of Imperialist Policy," *Hung Ch'i,* June 1, 1958.

[10] For a contrary view, see Peter Wiles, "China im Kräftespiel der Ostblockstaaten," *Osteuropa,* Vol. IX, No. 1, pp. 31-38.

[11] For Albania, see "Modern Revisionism Should be Combatted without Mercy until its Complete Theoretical and Political Destruction," *Zeri i Popullit,* June 22, 1958; and speech by Mehmet Shehu, reported in *ibid.,* October 26, 1958. For Bulgaria, Dimitar Dimov, "Leninism—Banner of the Peoples in the Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism," *Otechestven Front,* April 22, 1958; "General Retreat from Marxism-Leninism," *Rabotnichesko Delo,* May 15, 1958; "Current Revisionism and the Marxist-Leninist Teaching of the State," *Trud,* May 17, 1958. For Czechoslovakia, see, *e.g.,* speech by Vaclav Kopecky, reported in *Rude Pravo,* April 22, 1958.

[12] "Concerning the Seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia," *Trybuna Ludu,* Warsaw, May 14, 1958; also Gomulka's speech at Gdansk referring to Nagy's execution, reported in *ibid.,* June 29, 1958.

[13] Lack of space prevents detailed discussion and documentation of these measures. The reader is referred, however, to *East Europe, Osteuropa,* and *Osteuropa Wirtschaft,* passim; and also to two recent symposia: "The Satellites in Eastern Europe," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. CCCXVII, May 1958; and John H. Hallowell, ed., *The Soviet Satellite Nations: A Study of the New Imperialism,* Kallman, Gainesville, Fla., 1958. Also, Paul E. Zinner, ed., *National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe,* Columbia University Press, New York, 1956. The best summary and analysis is in Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Diversity,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960, pp. 304-322.

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satellites, Poland again was the last and most reluctant to follow suit, but there, too, the revisionists have gradually been silenced through stricter censorship and publication controls, the purging of editorial staffs, and other constraints on intellectual freedom, all of which represent an attenuation of the gains of the "Polish October."

Disillusionment and Change

But even more important than these external pressures has been the revisionists' own ideological evolution, especially their growing conviction that the attempt to reform communism while remaining *within* the basic Marxist-Leninist framework was bound to fail. This was strikingly corroborated by discussions which the author had last summer with a number of Polish ex-revisionists, who almost unanimously expressed the conviction that there is at present no possible "third way" between Khrushchev's new orthodoxy and a non-Communist, democratic form of socialism. They acknowledged that they themselves had abandoned the revisionist viewpoint and consciously become—in fact, if not in name—democratic socialists.

This evolutionary change in the thinking of East European revisionists is a complex but by no means unprecedented phenomenon. In fact, it parallels almost exactly the political and ideological development of the Yugoslav ex-Communist intellectual, Milovan Djilas, who similarly rejected the practical tenability of a Titoist (or Gomulkaist) midway position between Leninism and democratic socialism, and found himself inevitably drawn toward the latter.[14] There was one notable difference, however, between Djilas' earlier experience and that of the present-day East European revisionists. Djilas broke with "national communism" prior to the Hungarian revolution, when it was still possible to believe—as many revisionists undoubtedly did—in the feasibility of the national-communist formula of an intermediate position between Soviet domination, on the one hand, and true national independence and democratic freedom, on the other. The East European revisionists, however, now have before them the lesson of Hungary, where the national-communist (*i.e.*, revisionist) phase of the October revolution lasted but a few days, quickly yielding place to a kind of democratic socialism—all this, of course, *before* the final Soviet intervention. The only conclusion the post-Djilas revisionists can draw from this is that national communism (*i.e.*, revisionism) would, at best, be only a brief and transitory phase for any East European country attempting to free itself from the shackles of Soviet orthodoxy and control.[15]

Limitations of Revisionism

Looking more closely at the Hungarian and Polish revolutions, one can discern some of the reasons underlying the failure of revisionism to become a stronger and more lasting political force. Both the Hungarian uprising and the Polish October were characterized by a resurgence of profound romantic patriotism, accompanied by a reassertion of many traditional nationalistic and religious patterns. But both nationalism and religion were quite alien to many of the strongly internationalist and anti-clerical revisionist intellectuals, who consequently underestimated the popular strength of these forces, intensified as they were by Soviet attempts to crush them.

As another consequence of their intellectual orientation, the revisionists—with a few important exceptions—had little support among the peasantry who, outside of Czechoslovakia and East Germany, still remain the most numerous element in East European society. Thus, in Hungary, for example, the "third force" Populist ideology, best represented in the writings of Istvan Bibo, was more in line with the political propensities of the Hungarian rural population, while as a leftist (but non-Marxist and hence non-revisionist), nationalist and

[14] Contrast Djilas' 1953-54 articles in *Borba* and *Nova Misao*—now available in Abraham Rothberg, ed., *Anatomy of a Moral,* Praeger, New York, 1959—with his *The New Class,* Praeger, New York, 1957, and his article on the Hungarian revolution, published in *New Leader,* New York, November 19, 1956, which led to his imprisonment. For reflections of these differing viewpoints in Western leftist writing, see François Fejtö's pro-revisionist "Changes in the Communist World" and Henry Pachter's ex-revisionist "A Critical Comment," both in *Dissent,* Vol. VI, No. 2, pp. 171-76 and 177-78. Cf. Alvin Z. Rubinstein and J. Roffe Wike III, "The Djilas Heresy: Its Beginning and Development," *Western Political Quarterly,* Vol. XI, No. 4, pp. 774-87; Thomas T. Hammond, "The Djilas Affair and Jugoslav Communism," *Foreign Affairs,* New York, Vol. XXXIII, No. 2, pp. 298-315; Ernst Halperin, *The Triumphant Heretic,* Heinemann, London, 1958, pp. 216-44.

[15] On the other hand, despite fanciful Soviet propaganda to the contrary, it cannot be argued that democratic socialism as it was beginning to emerge in Hungary would — without Soviet intervention—have led inevitably to some kind of extreme right-wing, chauvinistic neo-Fascism. On the contrary, the political pattern that was taking shape was reminiscent of the 1945-47 period: nationalization of industry was almost universally accepted, along with reprivatization of agriculture and restoration of parliamentary democracy. (See United Nations *Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary,* Suppl. No. 18 (A/3592), New York, 1957, pp. 70-72; and Hugh Seton-Watson, introduction to Melvin J. Lasky, ed., *The Hungarian White Book,* Praeger, New York, 1957, pp. 22-23.)

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neutralist alternative to Rakosi's Stalinism and prewar Hungarian authoritarianism,[16] it held strong appeal for large segments of the intelligentsia and the workers as well. The fact, moreover, that it is the peasants, rather than the workers and the intelligentsia, who in Poland and to a far lesser extent in Hungary have preserved most of the gains of the October 1956 reforms, has further diminished any chances the revisionists may have had of securing mass support.

What has been said above, to be sure, is most pertinent to largely agrarian countries such as Poland and Hungary. Yet is is safe to assume that even in such highly industrialized countries as Czechoslovakia and East Germany, revisionism would sooner or later have to give way before the greater popular strength of more indigenous political movements and ideologies. For, no matter how great the moral prestige of men, say, like Wolfgang Harich (the leading East German revisionist, now in jail), there is little doubt that his concept of a "liberal communism" has far weaker roots in Germany than the old socialist and trade union traditions—as postwar developments in West Germany so convincingly attest.

During the glorious but brief heyday of the "thaw" in Poland and Hungary, the revisionists there felt that they had genuine contact with, and even leadership of, the masses. Polish and Hungarian revisionist writers and student and youth leaders were certainly in the forefront of the thaw, but this was largely because, as Communists, they were the only critics of the *status quo* who had access to the means of élite and mass communication and thus were able to provide leadership in the drive for liberalization. Paradoxically, the revisionists were unwittingly paving the way for their own loss of political leadership. For the more they succeeded in arousing latent popular forces of opposition, the more they tended to be displaced in popular favor by "legitimate" spokesmen of the older political and social trends—*i.e.*, peasant, worker, and religious leaders deriving their popular support from past positions of influence and their adherence to traditional patterns of national patriotism and social and parliamentary democracy.[17]

Viewed in the light of all these factors, the prominence of revisionism during 1955-56 appears to have been an exceptional phenomenon, and its subsequent rapid decline becomes more readily understandable. In Poland particularly, and to a lesser extent in Hungary, revisionism has given way to a "neo-positivist" philosophy—referred to in Poland by the term "organic work"—of economic collaboration with the regime combined with hostility to its official ideology.[18] The people at large, and particularly the youth, have ceased for the present to take any interest in communism or any other political ideology, and their hopes are now centered in gradual economic improvement rather than apocalyptic political salvation.[19]

A Look Back

To point out that revisionism has ceased to be an effective force in Communist life, and probably will remain quiescent for some time to come, is not at all to minimize the importance of its past achievements. For all the brevity of its hour in the limelight, revisionism played a major role in the historic drama that unfolded in the Soviet East European empire in the years of crisis between the death of Stalin and the end of 1956. It may be well, therefore, to look back briefly at the record of its past contributions before offering some final speculations with regard to the prospects of a future revival.

There can be no question that the East European revisionists played a vital and even indispensable part in expanding the political thaw which followed Stalin's death. As pointed out earlier, only they could have performed this task because, as Communists, they had access to the means of mass communication. Moreover, because they had in most cases been identified as Stalinists themselves, their ultimate revulsion against the excesses and crimes of Stalinism when these were bared by Khrushchev was that much more intense. It infused their writings with a "dynamic of disillusionment" which made them particularly moving and effective.[20]

The flowering of revisionism brought out the fact that a good many Communist intellectuals had never been genuine, ideologically convinced Stalinists, even though they had outwardly worn the Stalinist label. Their advocacy of Stalinist ideas had stemmed more from fear than from conviction, and once the reign of police terror

[16] See translation of one of Bibo's memoranda in Imre Kovacs, ed., *Facts about Hungary,* Hungarian Committee, New York, 1959, pp. 159-77. Also, "Hungary's Populist Writers," *East Europe,* Vol. VIII, No. 2, pp. 32-41; Zoltan Szabo, "Populismo ungherese," *Passato e Presente,* No. 8, March-April 1959, pp. 1014-20.

[17] For a contrary, pro-revisionist view regarding Poland, see K. A. Jelenski, "Pologne: l'Alliance des bien-pensants," *Preuves,* No. 86, June 1958, pp. 40-45.

[18] See particularly Stanislaw Stomma, "The Shade of Winkelried," *Tygodnik Powszechny,* June 21, 1959.

[19] Cf. Czeslaw Milosz, "Das Ende der Apokalypse," *Forum,* Vol. VI, No. 67/68, July-August 1959, pp. 246-49 (first of a two-part article).

[20] Cf. Max Scheler, *Vom Umsturz der Werte,* Vol. I *(Das Ressentiment im Aufbau der Moralen),* 1922, p. 84; and George Simmel, "Faithfulness and Gratitude," in *The Sociology of George Simmel,* Kurt H. Wolff, ed. and trans., Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1950, pp. 383-84.

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was attenuated and a few chinks opened in the armor of thought controls, their courage and scepticism rapidly reasserted themselves.[21] Revisionism also exposed the weakness of an ideology which, under Stalin, had taken on qualities of irrationality and an almost theological dogmatism that were glaringly inconsistent with the original rationalist inspiration and spirit of Marxism.

Indeed, the gap between theory and reality had become so great that the revisionist intellectuals could no longer bridge or rationalize it. Perhaps the main reason why they could not remain silent was their violent emotional revulsion against Stalinist tortures, deportations, and mass murder. But this revulsion also had deeper ideological roots. By the very fact of their initial sincere commitment to the internationalist and humanistic aspects of Marxist socialism, the East European revisionists were also philosophically committed to 19th-century rationalist and humanist thinking. It was because of this commitment that many had been impelled to embrace communism in revulsion against the irrational horrors of Nazism, and this same commitment made it impossible for them to go on accepting and justifying such Stalinist excesses as the Slansky trial and the "Doctors' Plot."

The revisionists played one other significant political role. Their initial leadership of the liberalization movements in Poland and Hungary served to some extent as a restraining influence over the tendency of the masses to rush impetuously into revolt. This, of course, was more true in Poland than in Hungary, particularly after the Poznan rising of June 1956 demonstrated the dangers of a runaway development. It was less true in Hungary, primarily because the relative weakness and extreme Stalinism of the party apparatus tended to make the forces of popular revolt more volatile and less amenable to restraining influence, especially an influence emanating from an element within the party.

A Look Ahead

What, then, are the prospects for a future resurgence of revisionism? As the author has already pointed out, it is probable that a large proportion of yesterday's leading East European revisionists—whether or not they remain nominally Communist Party members—have become today's convinced, albeit to a large extent politically

[21] Cf. K. A. Jelenski, "The Polish 'Earthquake,'" *Encounter*, Vol. VII, 2, No. 35, pp. 37-8; and Peter Wiles, "In a Land of Unwashed Brains: A Polish Scrapbook," *ibid.*, Vol. VII, 4, No. 37, pp. 15-6.

Revisionism Is . . .

the abandonment of the Leninist concept of partisanship, *bourgeois objectivism*, and [a surrender] to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois concepts . . . *nationalism* . . . bourgeois liberalism . . . bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism . . . a pretext of combating presentism . . . bourgeois objectivism . . . in point of fact, a rehash, in the fifties of the 20th century, of Bernsteinism in new conditions . . . slander against the Soviet Union and the socialist camp [and] simultaneously an offensive against the workers in the capitalist countries . . . petty-bourgeois opportunist deviationism. . . .

Revisionists . . .

are opponents of the dictatorship of the proletariat . . . see nothing positive in the policy of our party . . . wage battle against proletarian internationalism . . . get themselves involved in details and particulars and lose sight of the fundamental phenomena . . . distort the history of the international labor movement and the Communist parties . . . [are] filled wih frenzied hatred of communism . . . [say] that Communists [are] ignoramuses, incapable of guiding science, culture and education . . . [preach] rotten theories . . . [advocate] the policy of "opening the valves" and "letting things drift" . . . are falsifying history, seeking to revive nationalist survivals and to discredit everything that consolidates the socialist nations and brings them closer to each other . . . say: Marxism-Leninism is a splendid thing. It just has to be trimmed a little bit. And so they trim and trim and will continue to trim until nothing is left, until the workers lose their independence again . . . **In exposing the revisionists . . . we should use our tried weapon—scientific argument.**

—From "The Struggle of the Communist and Workers' Parties Against Revisionism"—Institutes of Marxism-Leninism, Bucharest, August 25-September 2, 1959: **World Marxist Review**, Prague, January 1960, pp. 64-80.

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ineffective, democratic socialists. However, revisionism—still in the strict sense of a movement to reform communism within the Marxist-Leninist framework—is undoubtedly an everpresent potential force which tends to generate new vigor under conditions of Stalinism, or even perhaps (though more slowly) of Khrushchev's neo-orthodoxy. Like molten lava in a volcano, which erupts when the stone plug in the crater's mouth gives way, revisionism is always there and may spring to life when a confluence of certain essential factors occurs to release it.

What these factors are may be clarified by reference to the conditions which made possible the thaw of 1955-57. The two most essential were: (1) factionalism in the Soviet and satellite parties, arising out of the post-1953 struggle for power among Stalin's successors; and (2) mass popular unrest caused mainly by economic discontent and further heightened in the East European satellites by nationalist dissatisfactions.

Thus, it is evident first of all that developments in the Soviet Union will be a vital key to the future course of developments in Eastern Europe. With regard to the situation in the CPSU, Khrushchev's elimination of all serious challengers would appear to have assured his full control of a unified party for the near future. However, the Soviet leader's advanced age (66) is one of the most important political facts in the Communist world today, and when the problem of his succession eventually arises, the new struggle for power in the Soviet party and its reverberations in the satellites could again create conditions favorable to the start of a new liberalization trend, and hence to a resurgence of revisionism. Moreover, just as the thaw of the post-Stalin period had its start in the Soviet Union before spreading to the satellites, so any new thaw in Eastern Europe will probably take its cue from prior developments in the USSR.

But it is not only in this respect that Soviet developments will affect those in the East European orbit. Soviet policies in relation to the orbit countries have an important bearing on the second factor mentioned above, *i.e.,* popular unrest. For the present, Krushchev's concessions to economic and nationalist dissatisfactions in the satellites appear to have somewhat lessened the mass aspect and acuteness of popular unrest,[22] but discontent has probably only subsided. Past experience indicates that economic concessions do not, in the long run, satiate popular hunger but rather whet the appetite for more.

A reversal of Khrushchev's economic liberalization policies both at home and vis-à-vis the bloc countries seems unlikely during his lifetime, and the increasingly deep effect they are having on Soviet and satellite life make it improbable that his successors will be willing or able to hazard reversing them (most certainly not while they are competing for his throne). Even more than Khrushchev, they will face the necessity of choosing between two alternatives: either to move farther toward what Professor W. W. Rostow calls a "mass consumption society" (and therefore a less totalitarian one),[23] or to divert the vastly augmented industrial capacity of the bloc into foreign adventures.[24] Should the first alternative be chosen, resulting in an increased diffusion of economic and political power, and should the party's continual drive to justify its increasingly anomalous role[25] gradually give way to a more "efficiency-oriented" bureaucratic ethos,[26] then the chances for further liberalization, perhaps more economically than politically oriented, may eventually improve. (This does not necessarily mean that the Soviet expansionist threat to the non-Communist world will diminish; indeed, a more rational totalitarian system may be more dangerous.[27])

[22] Cf. Peter Wiles, "Die Macht im Vordergrund, or the Sociology of Communism Desophisticated," *Soviet Survey,* No. 28, April-June 1959, pp. 73-80.

[23] A restudy of totalitarianism is badly needed after the 1955-57 events in Eastern Europe, which would seem to cast doubt on some of the earlier conclusions of Hannah Arendt (see footnote 5), and of C. J. Friedrich and Z. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1956. See William Ebenstein's review of the latter, "The Study of Totalitarianism," *World Politics,* Vol. X, No. 2, pp. 274-88; Donald W. Treadgold, "Toward Understanding Totalitarianism," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VI, No. 5, pp. 37-43; Brzezinski, "Totalitarianism and Rationality," *American Political Science Review,* Vol. L, No. 3, pp. 751-63; and Arendt, *op. cit.,* pp. 461-510.

[24] See summary of Professor Rostow's lectures at Cambridge University in *The Economist,* London, August 15 and 22, 1959.

[25] Cf. Richard Lowenthal, "Party vs. State: The Permanent Revolution is on Again," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VI, No. 5, pp. 1-7; and "Our Peculiar Hell," *Dissent,* Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 348-57.

[26] The best overall recent analysis of probable future Soviet developments, in the author's view, is Raymond Aron's "Soviet Society in Transition," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VI, No. 6, pp. 5-10. See also Aron's "Une révolution totalitaire," Suppl. to *Preuves,* No. 82, December 1957; Adam B. Ulam, "Soviet Ideology and Soviet Foreign Policy," *World Politics,* Vol. XI, No. 2, pp. 153-72, and "Expansion and Coexistence: Counterpoint in Soviet Foreign Policy," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VIII, No. 5, pp. 1-6; Barrington Moore, Jr., *Terror and Progress: USSR,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1954, pp. 179-231; W. W. Rostow, *The Dynamics of Soviet Society,* Norton, New York, 1953, pp. 252-59; Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1955, pp. 499-500.

[27] Marshall D. Shulman, "Changing Appreciation of the Soviet Problem," *World Politics,* Vol. X, No. 4, pp. 499-511; and U. S. Senate, Foreign Relations Committee, "United States Foreign Policy: U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe" (86th Cong., 2nd Session, No. 11, February 14, 1960), pp. 35-44.

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In any event, the experience of the last half decade has shown that neither the East European Communist intellectuals' drive for humanist, internationalist, democratic socialism, nor the aspirations of the masses under Communist rule for economic improvement and true national independence, can be indefinitely suppressed, much less transformed into willing acquiescence. Like the thirst for freedom and justice in which it has its roots, revisionism is self-generating. Its influence is in abeyance at present, but chances are that it will eventually arise once more and repeat the historic role it played in the years 1955-56.

Rationality and Doctrine in Economic Thought

By Bernard Cazes

NO ECONOMIST, indeed no social scientist, engaged in the study of the Soviet Union can proceed very far without inquiring into the role ideology plays in the politics and the power structure of the Soviet state.[1] Communist statecraft of course claims Marxist-Leninist doctrine as its supreme ideological authority, but the economist who seeks to isolate the strictly economic elements of Marxism is soon confronted with the classic difficulty of distinguishing the permanent essence of the doctrine from the aspects that are merely ephemeral and subject to revision. Throughout its history, the party has characterized some doctrinal modifications as "constructive applications of Marxist method" and denounced others as travesties or betrayals of Marxism. But how is one to differentiate *a priori* between "creative initiative" in applying Marxism and "anti-Marxist revisionism?" Why, for example, should the Yugoslav workers' councils be denounced in *Pravda*[2] as anarcho-syndicalist in inspiration, while the abolition of the Soviet MTS (machine tractor stations), which any reader of Stalin's *Economic Problems of Socialism* would consider a serious doctrinal deviation, is carried out without the slightest murmur of dissent and hailed as a great improvement in the organization of Soviet agriculture?

One answer, derived empirically from political practice, suggests simply that in the Communist world only revisions enunciated and approved by the party leadership become "consistent" with Marxist orthodoxy, while those which emanate from outside the ruling élite and fail to receive its approval are false and subversive. It is obvious, however, that this purely formal criterion evades the problem in that it fails to indicate *why* the leading party circles reject or approve any given reform proposal. A more useful approach, and one with which this writer agrees, is exemplified in an interesting article by H. Achminow[3] proposing to explain the criteria used by the party in judging doctrinal change in terms of power politics. Accordingly, innovations which, even though seemingly heretical, are likely to enhance the power monopoly of the Communist Party will be considered favorably, while those which might prove detrimental to the party's power interests, even if apparently consistent with Marxist dogma, will be rejected. Thus, for instance, the last-ditch Communist defense of the thesis of the workers' absolute and relative pauperization under "capitalism" can be readily explained by the fact that the dictum represents one of the principal justifications of the Communist struggle for power; hence, its rejection would bring into question Communist policy as a whole. Conversely, the dissolution of the MTS was not considered detrimental to the party dictatorship and

[1] See "Ideology and Power Politics"—articles by R. N. Carew Hunt, Samuel L. Sharp, and Richard Lowenthal, *Problems of Communism*, Vol. VII, No. 2, (March-April, 1958).

[2] December 18, 1956.

[3] "Marxism: Dogma or Guide?", *Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the USSR*, Munich, October, 1959.

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was therefore wholeheartedly approved. This view, then, regards Marxism less as a dogma than as a guide to action.

The general analysis just outlined can be usefully applied to the particular field of Marxist economic thought, and for this purpose a controversial article by the Polish economist Oskar Lange, entitled "Marxism and Bourgeois Economics,"[4] offers a good point of departure. Professor Lange draws a conceptual distinction between "political economy"—a science devoted to determining the laws of distribution of the national income among the various social strata—and the objective science of "economics," which "relegates all problems affecting the bases of the social system to sociology," and purports only to be:

> **. . . a science of a certain type of relationships between man and goods resulting from the confrontation of a multiplicity of needs and a scarcity of means to satisfy them. The bases of this relationship between man and goods are in principle independent of social relationships, and the economic laws to which they give rise are independent of social conditions.**

In Lange's view, then, a scientific approach to economic problems can proceed along two distinct though parallel lines: it may take the form of social technology, aiming at an optimal utilization of national productive resources; or it may be a method of social criticism, analyzing the distribution of the gains and costs of economic growth.

It is the purpose of this article to assess the prospects for the evolution of economic thought and practice in the Soviet orbit, and to show how they vary in the two broad fields of economic analysis delineated above. As the following discussion will endeavor to bring out, the economic principles of Marxism are being progressively modified to the extent that they impede the rational utilization of factors of production, but on the other hand they remain immutable wherever their modification might bring into question the existing distribution of power in Communist society and give rise to social criticism originating outside the center of power.

The Pull of Economic Rationality

Although the desire for efficiency in the Soviet Union might be expected to lead to a certain lack of dogmatism in the application of Marxist economic doctrine (particularly since the sacred texts contain very little guidance on the subject of an economic model for a socialist state), it remains a fact that modifications conducive to a greater degree of rationality in the conception, content, and execution of economic plans have been adopted by the Soviet leaders only with great circumspection. There are several reasons for this. First of all, as the British economist Peter Wiles has rightly pointed out on a number of occasions,[5] Marxist economic thought is traditionally hostile to the notions of scarcity and economic measurement. When Karl Marx wrote *Das Kapital,* he did not offer the world a treatise on socialist economics so much as a critique of bourgeois political economy, which he reproached for neglecting the problem of the distribution of national income among social classes and for failing to inquire into the laws governing the evolution of the capitalist system (which his non-Marxist contemporaries considered immutable). He paid very little attention, as have his followers since, to the problems of the economic optimum, probably because of the conviction that economic scarcity and inefficient use of productive resources were attributable only to the existence of an inequitable and irrational social system. In Stalin's day this paralysis of economic inquiry was further aggravated by distrust of the work of Western economists, which was uniformly branded as bourgeois and therefore useless and entirely apologetic.

Apart from intellectual isolationism, the powerful Communist attachment to dogma in economic matters can be explained by the great difficulty of establishing precise limits between concessions that are but tactical expedients and deviations that might threaten the substance of the creed. For Marxists accustomed to explaining history in terms of transformations of the economic infrastructure, it is obviously difficult to believe that a doctrinal revision of Marxist economic concepts would have no repercussions on the rhythm of socialist construction. After all, the abandonment of certain doctrinal principles concerning the organization and functioning of capitalism has always been considered sufficient to turn a good Marxist and revolutionary into a renegade.

If, despite this attachment to dogma, certain aspects of Marxist economic doctrine have undergone evolutionary modifications, it is because two very different influences have been working in the same direction: the intellectual activity of a few relatively non-conformist individuals, and the play of certain objective forces conducive to greater economic rationality. On the intellectual plane, the period since the death of Stalin, and more particularly since the 20th Congress, has witnessed courageous efforts by some economists and others to reconsider problems that Stalinist dogmatism treated as definitively resolved.

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[4] *Polityka* (Warsaw), March 1 and 8, 1958.

[5] Particularly in the magazines, *Soviet Studies* (Glasgow), October, 1952, *Economic Journal* (June, 1956), *Oxford Economic Papers* (October, 1953 and February, 1956), and *Soviet Survey* (London) passim.

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Overly detailed central planning, with its arbitrariness, excessive emphasis on rapid industrialization, and coercion, was first attacked and modified by the Yugoslavs. The Poles, especially after October 1956, have also vigorously criticized over-centralized planning based primarily on political criteria without reference to economic rationality. Wladyslaw Bienkowski, the former Minister of National Education, ridiculed what he called the "lunatic economy,"[6] and a number of the more liberal-minded Polish professional economists advocated a return to the market mechanism as the primary instrument for coordinating decentralized planning decisions. Subsequently, certain decentralization measures were actually introduced in the Polish economy. In other East European countries as well, particularly in Hungary, criticisms were voiced against the insufficient autonomy granted to individual enterprises, the sway of administrative orders from the center to the detriment of economic efficiency, and the unwieldly bureaucratic machinery at every level of the productive process.[7]

IT SOON became clear, moreover, that the critics could not avoid raising questions about the *content* of economic policies. One need cite here only three examples: the article "What Price Socialism?", published in September 1956, in which its Polish author, Jan Kott, examined in Marxist terms "the real social cost of the premises of socialism and industrialization in technologically and economically backward nations;"[8] the "theses" of the now imprisoned East German philosopher, Wolfgang Harich, who maintained that history had vindicated Trotsky's prediction that Stalin's methods of industrializing Russia would have disastrous political consequences, and who advocated increased consumer goods production in the socialist countries;[9] and, finally, the speeches and writings of the executed Hungarian Premier Imre Nagy, who as early as 1953 had come out in favor of a balanced development of agriculture and industry as the only policy consistent with Marxist-Leninist principles.[10] Criticisms such as these clearly go beyond the confines of economic technology since they no longer deal merely with the abstractions of economic and administrative concepts, but examine the tangible social costs and benefits of economic policy. Significantly, it is this type of social rather than purely economic criticism which has been drastically suppressed in the Soviet orbit ever since the 1957 drive against "revisionism."

NOTWITHSTANDING the importance of revisionist criticism, it is obvious that the principles of economic rationality, and more particularly of the market mechanism, would have had little chance of asserting themselves if there had been nothing more to recommend them than the advocacy of a few non-conformist individuals.[11] In fact, however, objective forces have also been exerting pressure in the same direction. There is, first of all, the determined effort on the part of the Communist leaders to increase efficiency and productivity, and decentralization of the bureaucratic structure has been one of the important first steps in this pursuit. But, as Peter Wiles has pointed out, it is difficult to decentralize the economic administrative machinery without liberating at the same time the prices of goods and services, at least to some extent.[12] The establishment of an economic organization with a territorial (and no longer a vertical) base—accomplished first by Tito and later undertaken by Khrushchev under the economic reforms initiated in 1957—renders economic planning in physical terms much more difficult, since "a Ministry, dealing with a single commodity, could think *in natura.* The multi-product Sovnarkhoz, however, is at every point comparing one product with another"; thus "the role of money is enhanced by the territorial principle."[13] Furthermore, the machinery of central planning requires, for the manipulation of physical controls, a vast number of technicians who could otherwise be much more usefully employed in the individual production units at the base of the economic pyramid or, to a certain extent, in basic economic research. Hence, reliance on the market mechanism would greatly alleviate the scarcity of technical personnel.

[6] *Przeglad Kulturalny* (Warsaw), October 23, 1956.

[7] See in particular the book by the Hungarian economist Jonas Kornai, *Overcentralization in Economic Administration* (Oxford University Press.)

[8] *Przeglad Kulturalny,* September 6, 1956.

[9] Text published in the *Observer* (London), March 17, 1957.

[10] See Imre Nagy, *On Communism,* Praeger, New York, 1957; also the French edition, *Un Communisme qui n'oublie pas l'homme* (introduction by François Fejto), Plon, Paris.

[11] The author does not want to create the impression that the market mechanism and economic rationality are necessarily synonymous. However, in an economy where markets do not function and where mathematical techniques of solving economic problems on a nationwide scale have not been developed (or where the necessary technical personnel and electronic machinery are unavailable), it is only reasonable that the search for economic rationality should entail at least a partial restoration of markets.

[12] See "The Economics of Decentralization," *Soviet Survey,* January-March, 1959, pp. 63-68.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 67. Inter-regional specialization within the COMECON also requires more accurate price calculation (*cf.* the report of the Economic Commission for Europe for 1958, p. 79).

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Nevertheless, the logic of these considerations has thus far prevailed in full measure only in Yugoslavia, where free markets have been instituted, and where the national plan fixes merely the distribution of the national product between consumption and investment, while all decisions relating to current production, and in large measure to investment as well, are now made at the enterprise level.

Development of Economic Thought

Yugoslavia is also the only country where far-reaching decentralization and other concrete economic reforms have been accomplished by officially avowed changes in economic theory and doctrine. In the USSR and the other countries of the Soviet bloc, where more limited reforms of economic policy (increased diversion of resources to consumer goods production) and of administration (decentralization and recourse to economic production stimulants) have in fact also occurred, official economic doctrine has thus far remained frozen.[14]

This is not to say, however, that economic thought in the Soviet world remains at the standstill to which it was reduced by Stalin in the early 1930's. Indeed, the opposite is true. For several years now, a lively discussion has been in progress among economists in the USSR, primarily with regard to the problem of developing objective criteria of economic rationality and applying them in the planning process. More specifically, the debate centers around such questions as the scope of the law of value and the role of prices in a socialist economy, the function of interest rates in relation to the time factor,[15] and, most important perhaps, the applicability of modern mathematical techniques of measurement (input-output analysis and linear programming) to the problems of a planned socialist economy. This new and cautious, yet determined scientific effort, which seeks to substitute a system of rational control over the allocation of resources and the whole productive process for the arbitrary and haphazard decisions of political and administrative agencies, has been stimulated, perhaps in equal measure, by the growing complexity of the planning problems connected with running a rapidly maturing industrial economy, and by the insistence of the Khrushchev regime on increasing efficiency and productivity.

The two basic theoretical questions that confront Communist planners—and for that matter anyone concerned with operating a centrally planned economy without the benefit of free markets—are the problems of plan consistency and investment efficiency.[16] The problem of *"consistency"* is the problem of balancing, coordinating and synchronizing national plans: given definite targets of final production and intermediate consumption (clothes, housing, appliances, trucks, machinery, guns, missiles, etc.), what quantities of basic resources and intermediate products will have to be produced in order to achieve (in the desired time) the final production goal? The concept of *"efficiency"* (or economic optimum), on the other hand, involves the problem of how (*i.e.,* in what proportions) to use the available time, land, manpower, and physical and technological resources so as to achieve maximum quantities of the desired final product.

NOW THESE are problems which in advanced Western liberal economies are quite satisfactorily resolved by the price mechanism and widely dispersed decision-making. In the Soviet Union, however, where the planning process remains highly centralized in spite of the recent reforms, where (with a few minor exceptions in the agricultural sector) no free markets are allowed to function, and where, consequently, the price structure is by and large economically irrational and irrelevant, these questions still await a satisfactory solution. In selecting investment alternatives and coordinating national plans, the Soviet planning authorities still use extremely crude trial-and-error methods, resulting in poor investment efficiency,[17] imbalances in plans, and incalculable economic waste. So much so indeed that, according to the report of a French economic mission which visited the USSR in May 1958,

> **. . . if the goal of Soviet planning is the rapid achievement of a standard of living generally comparable to that envisaged by Western economies, it seems clear that the methods of planning and the relations between the central**

[14] Only recently, for example, Khrushchev has declared: "As in the past, the Soviet economy is based on the primacy of heavy industry . . ." Speech before the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, January 14, 1960.

[15] *Cf.* G. Grossman, "The Time Factor in Soviet Economics," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. VIII, No. 3 (May-June 1958); and documents relating to the Conference on Investment Efficiency held in Moscow from June 9-14, 1958 (*Cahiers de l'Institut de Science Economique Appliquée,* series G, No. 6).

[16] *Cf. Les Méthodes actuelles soviétiques de planification* (Cahiers de l'Institut de Science Economique Appliquée, Series G, No. 7.) Paris, 1958, pp. 29-30. This is the report of a French economic mission that visited the USSR in May 1958 in order to study Soviet planning methods. (Hereafter referred to as the French Report.)

[17] Particularly as a result of an incorrect method of calculating amortization. It should be noted, however, that a change in amortization calculations is now planned, and that the Central Statistical Office of the USSR is scheduled to make a complete inventory of total Soviet economic resources.

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and regional organisms and the individual enterprise will have to be modified. To raise the standard of living under a system of integral planning—while granting the consumer a certain degree of freedom of choice—would require in fact an analytical process as detailed and unwieldly as that susceptible of use only in the sphere of industrial equipment or in scientific research proper. And it does not appear that at the present time the analytical instruments available to Soviet planners are supple enough to make such a complex analysis possible.[18]

The French mission's report adds, however, that it would be unwise to disregard the emerging prospects of improving the instruments of economic measurement and decentralizing economic control.

The explanation of this cautious note of optimism must be sought primarily in the report's reference to the prospective availability of new tools of economic analysis, or more precisely perhaps, the efforts of an important group of Soviet economists and industrial managers to develop techniques of linear programming and input-output analysis, the first of which could go some distance toward providing a rational price system reflecting the relative scarcity of resources (and thus making available objective investment criteria), and the second could facilitate a more exact method of coordinating plans. As long as the party leadership remains unwilling to institute a free market in producers' goods—and there is no reason to believe that it will change its stand in the foreseeable future—and also shies away from carrying the decentralization of the planning machinery a good deal farther than it has, these mathematical methods of economic measurement represent the only available approach toward a rational solution of the problems of efficiency and consistency in the Soviet planning process.

KHRUSHCHEV himself seems to have seen that fundamental improvements in this respect are necessary if his ambition to outproduce the Western economies is to have any chance of success. He also knows that, without a modicum of intellectual freedom, no serious research in economics will be done and no significant results produced. Thus, for the first time in two decades or so, Soviet economists are relatively free to debate certain technical economic issues without harsh doctrinal interference from the Kremlin. This relatively tolerant attitude is also responsible for the fact that the work of Western economists can now be given serious consideration in the Soviet Union, that econometrics has finally been officially accepted as a science applicable to economic problems of socialist countries, that such pioneering works as the recent book on *The Economic Calculation of the Optimum Utilization of Resources,* by the Soviet mathematician L. V. Kantorovich, are published and widely discussed, and that active work, albeit still limited in scope, in input-output analysis and in linear programming is now in progress in Moscow.

The party, to be sure, has not abdicated its control over the determination of long-range economic goals—and it certainly cannot be expected to do so in the future. Nor has it surrendered any substantial tenets of Marxist economic dogma. Faced by important concrete problems, it has merely raised the ideological ceiling in order to allow Soviet economists and industrial managers to develop new techniques of economic analysis and a planning apparatus commensurate with the party's ambitious economic aims. By the same token, there is no intention to permit the evolution of Soviet economic thought to exceed these technological limits and become an instrument of social criticism. Is there, in fact, any danger that these limits may be transgressed?

Prospects for Economic Revisionism

Theoretically, economic revisionism could transgress permissible limits in one of two ways: either as a result of conscious intent, or as a natural, spontaneous consequence of the very logic of economic reasoning. Let us consider these possibilities in the context of the Communist system of power and of recent trends in economic thinking in the Soviet bloc countries.

Assuming that economic inquiry in these countries may legitimately address itself to the problem of how to guard against a return to practices that are at the same time inhumane and economically harmful, there is no question in the author's view that sole reliance upon criteria of pure economic rationality—in the *present* state of economic science—does not provide a sufficient answer. Besides this, it would be necessary to envisage the creation of institutional safeguards designed to protect the citizen against what a farsighted Bolshevik, Christian Rakovsky (later a victim of the Great Purge), called in 1928 the corruptive effects of power upon those wielding it—in this case, economic power.

There can indeed be no doubt that undue concentration of economic power, in combination with the will to achieve a much higher rate of capital accumulation than the level of voluntary saving permits, tends to encourage the development of anti-democratic practices. In fact, Lenin was much more clear-thinking—or honest—than any of his successors in acknowledging that, even in a society ruled by the Communist Party, the economic policy of the state could conflict with the interests of

[18] French Report, p. 84.

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the working class, of which he regarded trade unions as the traditional defenders.[19] In a capitalist economy, the market itself helps to define the needs and interests of the citizens, but once the market is suppressed, it becomes necessary to find other mechanisms whereby these needs and interests may be determined. The fact that the Communist Party, as the sole repository of political power, claims for itself the role of exclusive judge and articulator of working-class interests does not solve the problem, but merely obscures the difficulties involved.

A TRULY democratic solution, lacking as yet in any Communist country, might eventually have been provided by the workers' councils established in Poland at the time of the October 1956 events, but this possibility now seems to have vanished. The direct reason for their failure to develop has been the systematic action of the Polish regime to restrict the councils to purely administrative tasks and the boosting of plant productivity. At the same time, however, it must be noted that, with a few exceptions such as Oskar Lange and especially Michal Kalecki,[20] Polish economists for their own part have tended to take a narrow economic approach to the workers' councils rather than giving attention to their broader social potentialities. That is to say, the councils have been considered significant from the standpoint of administrative decentralization of the economy, but they have *not* been regarded as a possible mechanism for ensuring democratic control of central economic planning—in particular, with respect to the planners' determination of the structure of final consumer demand.

This hesitancy of Soviet bloc economists to venture beyond the limits of strictly economic criticism is clearly evidenced in an article, "The Economic Model of Socialism," written by the Polish economist, C. Bobrowski.[21] Although the author does indeed pose the problem of democratic controls, he nevertheless fails to come to grips with the basic issue of institutional guarantees. He simply states that in case of problems incapable of being resolved by the central planning organs or individual production units by means of economic measurement alone, there ought to be "wide public discussion of the choices before the planners" in order to provide the latter with a sound basis for reaching their decisions; and further that the most important decisions, in order to reduce the risk of hasty, ill-considered action, should not be "the prerogative of a corps of technocrats, but should emanate from the representatives of society." This, however, begs the further question of subjecting these "representatives" themselves to some kind of institutional checks upon their authority—either of an official character, through recognition of the right of opposition; or extra-official, through recognition of the right to strike. Nowhere in the Communist bloc today are economists actively giving attention to these issues, nor is there any evidence to suggest an inclination on the part of the political leaderships of the bloc countries to contemplate such institutional guarantees despite the fact that mere extension of the mechanisms of the market and of economic measurement could not possibly be an adequate substitute for them.

But even if we exclude, by hypothesis, the likelihood of an effort by economists in the Communist countries to devise institutional means of reducing what have been described (by the French economist, F. Perroux) as "the human costs" of a planned economy, does not the expanding scope of economic thought in these countries nevertheless entail the danger of setting in motion a development of ideas which will prove incompatible with essential elements of the Soviet system of power? The report of the French economic mission, previously referred to, seems to suggest that such a danger already exists. It states (on p. 80):

. . . the extension of measurements of investment efficiency to comparisons between different sectors of industry obviously threatens to call into question certain primary objectives of the [Seven-Year] Plan, at least some of those which affect intermediate and even final capital goods production. And this is unquestionably something that Soviet economists shy away from.

Some Tentative Hypotheses

Projecting this line of reasoning in other directions, one can offer the following tentative estimate of possible future trends in Communist economic development:

1) The quest for greater profit-earning capacity may prove unfavorable to heavy industry to the extent that profit margins, which are no longer fixed by plan, may be higher for light industry owing to the large volume of unsatisfied demand for consumer goods—assuming, of course, that an adequate proportion of total national income is allowed to enter consumption channels. This difficulty, however, will certainly not be irremediable provided the budget continues to function to some extent as a means of redistributing investment credits—a function which it appears difficult to do away with entirely.

[19] "On the Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions under the New Economic Policy" (Decision of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), January 13, 1922), V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (3rd Russian Edition), Vol. 27, p. 148.

[20] See article in *Nowe Drogi* (Warsaw), November-December 1956.

[21] *Zycie Gospodarcze* (Warsaw), May 12, 1957).

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2) The increased emphasis now being placed on financing the capital investments of industrial enterprises out of the profits and depreciation allowances of the enterprises themselves is tending to give the latter greater financial autonomy. One consequence of this is likely to be an increase in the power of industrial managers to influence economic policy, at the expense of both the local *apparatchiki* and the central political authority. In addition, the combination of greater financial autonomy for individual enterprises or branches of industry and the previously mentioned tendency toward greater emphasis on profit-earning capacity may operate cumulatively to produce either over-investment in those branches of industry with capacity to dominate the market, or a preponderance of investment in light industries producing consumer goods. Either result would be detrimental to the policy of building up certain vital industries as "poles of development," since these industries would be less attractive because of the longer time required for profit-earning capacity to offset initial investment outlays.

3) If, as a consequence of the tendencies outlined above, the production mechanism becomes more flexible and quick to respond to consumer demands, meaning in effect increased consumer influence over the direction of industrial development, it is possible that final demand might gradually take on a structure similar to that in an economy of abundance (or "affluent society"). This would tend to channel greater resources into the production of all kinds of "gadgets" and durable consumer goods such as automobiles, toward which Soviet policy continues to manifest a very marked reserve. While the type of consumption pattern desired by the Soviet leaders is not yet very precisely defined, it can be assumed that they would prefer, in general, to preserve a much more simple and uniform pattern than the complex and individualistic Western model. [22]

A further point should be brought out in this connection. If forecasting the medium-term development of household consumption becomes a political matter even in countries with only partial economic planning, the same applies much more to countries where planning is peremptory and all-embracing—that is, where it is not simply a question of predicting, but one of actually fixing the proportion of the national income to be earmarked for accumulation, and hence the proportion left for consumption. This poses the question of whether the party would be willing to share a function of a *political* nature with economic experts, consumer groups, or other non-party organizations, even if the latter were to act only in an advisory capacity.

4) To offer one more final observation, it would appear that the Soviet leaders have not as yet given much thought to the possible consequences of allowing economists wider latitude to apply the concepts of economic "optimum" to the various levels of the economic structure—*i.e.,* the individual enterprise, the branch of industry, and the national economy (with regard to distribution of the national product between accumulation and consumption)—and to formulate proposed variations of production or investment at these different levels of analysis. In the author's view, this process of development could prove troublesome for a regime anxious to maintain strict ideological and political discipline. Indeed, the economic intelligentsia might become a sort of "intermediary power" enjoying an autonomous position which would enable it to formulate models of economic development and criteria of efficiency possibly contradictory to prevailing economic policy and liable to reveal the inadequacies of that policy. In this way, the economists' formulations might serve as a platform for social groups dissatisfied with the official line.

THE IDEAS advanced above represent, of course, nothing more than tentative working hypotheses which have yet to undergo the test of time and events. They could hardly be more inasmuch as the relationship between praxiology and policy is still a little-explored subject; and it is a striking fact that the policy "sciences" are regarded with no less suspicion by partisans of Western-type democracy than by the stoutest defenders of the sanctity of Marxist dogma. From this standpoint, the increasing resort to rational processes of thought in the formulation of economic decisions in the Soviet Union —impelled as much by objective forces as by the efforts of courageous intellectual pioneers—will at the very least shed new light upon what at present remains an obscure area of the social sciences.

[22] See Premier Khrushchev's speech delivered at Vladivostok on October 6, 1959. *Pravda,* October 8, 1959.

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The Polish "Economic Model"

By J. M. Montias

THE DEBATE OVER Poland's "economic model" and over the pros and cons of decentralization first flared up in Warsaw at the Second Congress of Polish Economists in June 1956, a few days before the Poznan uprising; it reached its height between Gomulka's return to power in October 1956 and the middle of 1957; it was already lying in ashes in October 1959 when Gomulka's report to the Central Committee of the United Workers' Party called for "a reinforcement of centralized controls" as a cure for "the excessively weakened central management of the economy." [1]

Yet the reforms which had been carried out in 1957-58 under the influence of this discussion were so timorous that the new party line cannot be satisfactorily explained as a latter-day retreat on ideological grounds. The reforms did not go much farther toward dismantling administrative control over the socialized economy than the measures taken in the Soviet Union, in Hungary and in Czechoslovakia in the last two years. They stopped a long way short of the radical transformation which the Yugoslav authorities carried out in their economic system between 1950 and 1952, when centralized price-setting was abolished and markets created to take the place of the old administrative controls which had been stifling initiative at the plant level.

The Call for Reforms

The halfhearted measures that were instituted also fell short of the demands of a majority of Polish economists who had spoken up in the debate against the "mistakes and excesses" of the Six-Year Plan of forced industrialization (1950-55). Wanting more than a mere temporary halt in excessive investments or compulsory collectivization, they had called for fundamental reforms which would act as safeguards against a "return to the past." In criticism of the course pursued by the regime after 1956, they argued that it was not enough to switch investment funds away from the engineering and defense industries—which had drawn the "cream" of manpower, materials, and equipment in the Six-Year Plan—toward the vegetating light consumer-goods industries. What was needed, these economists urged in their writings in 1956 and 1957 (more discreetly thereafter), was some sort of regulating mechanism, independent of the arbitrary judgments of the planners, which would prevent the most flagrant errors from recurring and would at least mitigate the rest.

To reduce the power of the center, to lodge a part of this power in autonomous enterprises and in local planning organs, to increase the influence of workers and employees in the management of each enterprise were some of the aims of these "liberal" and "revisionist" writers. Some of them looked to the price system—which during the Stalinist period had degenerated into a mere accounting device without any real influence over producers or planners—as the "regulating mechanism," the instrument for coordinating decentralized decisions. Such were also the views of many eminent members of the Economic Council, which had been set up shortly after Gomulka's return to power. It was the task of this body to advise the Council of Ministers on the reforms that should be introduced in the Polish economic system to cut down the waste and to revive the incentives of workers and plant managers. The Economic Council discharged this task with great energy, and most of the economic reforms that followed the Polish October were

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[1] W. Gomulka, report to the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the United Workers' Party, October 17, 1959. *Nowe Drogi*, Warsaw, No. 12, 1959, p. 28.

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indeed the result of the initiative of this agency and of its Commission on the Economic Model, headed by Professor Oskar Lange.

Persistent Failings

What then had gone wrong in Poland after 1956? The answer may be summarized as follows: Decentralization had given managers more leeway without giving them maps or instruments to steer their enterprises according to the general directions of higher authorities. Producers' prices were so out of date and were so far from reflecting true scarcities that a socialized firm seeking to maximize its profits on the basis of these prices was sure to come into conflict with central directives. The prices of some raw materials covered less than half their production costs. A few industries made large profits while others (such as coal mining) suffered heavy losses. Both prices of consumer and producer goods were completely out of line with relative prices on world markets. As we shall see later, the general reform of producers' prices scheduled for 1960 is not likely to provide the flexible adaptation to supply-and-demand changes characteristic of a properly articulated price system. The unwillingness of Poland's top planners to set up even a semblance of a free market for producer goods condemned their experiments from the start.

The meat crisis of mid-1959 was only a symptom of the malaise which caused the party to tighten its reins over the economy. The source of the trouble lay in the inability of the Council of Ministers and the Planning Commission to maintain a solid grip on the economy: despite all commands and exhortations, workers' absenteeism and labor turnover were rising, wages were overpaid, "financial discipline" was breaking down, and lower organs in the hierarchy were tolerating slack, easily fulfilled plans.

Illegal wage payments amounted to nearly half a billion zlotys in 1958 (out of a total wage fund of 123 billion zlotys). Unplanned increases in personal incomes during the first half of 1959 were running at a yearly rate of ten billion zlotys, or over five percent of total.[2] Loose planning at the level of the plant and at higher echelons in the framing of the yearly plans was mostly to blame. Workers were overfulfilling their piece-rate norms in most industries by 50 to 60 percent (by 100 percent in metal-working) and little or nothing was done to tighten up the norms when labor-saving equipment was introduced.[3] Officials of the Planning Commission were complaining toward the end of 1959 that the detailed plans submitted by ministries and their subordinate organs were systematically overstepping the cost limits set in the Commission's "directives" for the year, while their production plans fell short of the minimum targets assigned by the Commission. (The national income derived from the consolidated plans of the ministries for 1959 came to 10 billion zlotys less than the Planning Commission's target.) The production plans finally promulgated were close to the ministries' counter-proposals—but since these plans were "soft," they were easily overfulfilled. As a result, large payments had to be made for extra wages and bonuses, which had not been foreseen in the wage-fund limits.[4]

WEAK CONTROL over "decentralized investments," financed mainly from profits and depreciation allowances left at the disposal of enterprises, also reduced the accuracy of planning. These investments, which had been relatively unimportant during the Six-Year Plan (1950-55), rose to over one-third of the total investment fund during the first five months of 1959. Characteristically, outlays on decentralized investments were running about 16 percent above plan in 1959, while centralized investments were expected to keep within 4 percent of their limit.[5] From 1956 to 1959, there was also a marked increase in the relative importance of local budgets, whose outlays were less easily kept track of by the Planning Commission than those of the central government budget. During these years, the expenditures of the central budget rose only by a third, while the local budgets nearly doubled.[6]

The immediate result of all this drifting was the renewal of inflationary pressures and the appearance of market shortages, particularly in meat products, to-

[2] S. Frenkel, "Niedoskonala Kontrola" (Imperfect Control), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* Warsaw, No. 34, 1959, p. 6, and J. G. "Konsekwencje i niekonsekwencje" (Consequences and Inconsequences), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 40, 1959, p. 1.

[3] See for instance Gomulka's speech at the Third Party Congress of the United Workers' Party, March 10, 1959, *(Nowe Drogi,* No. 4, 1959, p. 53.)

[4] S. Hatt, "Pierwsze wnioski z resortowych projektow planow na rok 1960" (First conclusions on the ministerial projects of the 1960 plans), *Gospodarka Planowa,* Warsaw, No. 10, 1959, pp. 2-4. Note that above-plan increases in the wage fund ranging from 0.6 to 0.9 percent in different industries were permitted for every percentage-point overfulfillment of the production plans of the sector.

[5] S. Frenkel, "Inwestycje w 1959 r." (Investments in 1959), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 43, 1959, p. 1.

[6] A. Zawadzki, "Niektore zagadnienia fianasowe w gospodarce rad narodowych" (A few financial problems in the economy of the peoples' councils), *Gospodarka Planowa,* No. 9, 1959, p. 41.

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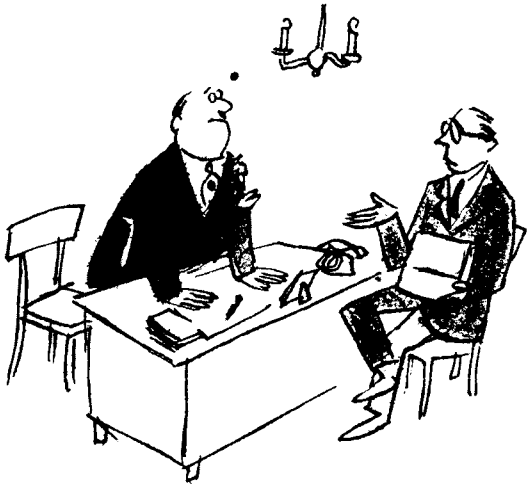
ward whose consumption a large part of the unplanned increases in personal incomes was directed. The decision taken at the last October plenum to jack up meat prices (by an average 22 percent) exposed the gravity of the situation. As Gomulka explained:

. . . the working class would not have had recriminations against us, if we had not permitted such a large increase in the purchasing power of the population. To give is easy and pleasant, but to take away calls for a lot of explanation. . . . We must now take prophylactic measures to see to it that this situation will not repeat itself.[7]

[7] Report to the Third Plenum, *Nowe Drogi,* No. 12, 1959, p. 30.



— A jak u was z planem funduszu płac?

rys. Karol Ferster

— Przekroczony.

—And what is the situation with your wage fund?
—Exceeded.

—*From* Szpilki *(Warsaw), Nov. 1, 1959.*

This is the tactical explanation of the consolidating trends of recent months.

The broader significance of these trends consists in the interaction of economic and political events. The return to centralized economic controls coincides with the revival of "administrative methods" in other areas: the pressure on the youth to take membership in party organizations, on the peasants to join producers' cooperatives ("agricultural circles") and on scholars and intellectuals to conform to "socialist principles." The harassment of private initiative in trade and industry and the renewed struggle against "speculators" and "kulaks" are part of the same story. [8]

Of course the close relationship between political and economic repression is not new in the annals of Polish communism; nor have "liberal" Polish economists ever been oblivious to it. To some of the most ardent supporters of full-scale decentralization in 1956 and 1957, the police methods that had been used in the past seemed a necessary concomitant of the frantic pace of industrialization to which they had been opposed, and of the centralized controls that were needed to keep wage demands in check. They saw in the workers' councils and in the institution of markets the best safeguard against a return to what they euphemistically called "the apparatus of stabilization." [9] Wlodzimierz Brus, who had been one of the most influential and dogmatic Marxists up to 1954 and had then shifted to the forefront of the decentralist movement, reflected on the first anniversary of Gomulka's accession to power that "economic reforms were not only fundamental from the economic point of view but also [provided] the basis of lasting political changes, as the essential condition of socialist democracy." [10] It is not surprising that the more liberal-minded economists are now apprehensive about the political changes which may follow the current hardening in economic policy.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE workers' councils sheds light on the political changes of recent years. The first councils sprang up spontaneously in the third quarter of 1956. They were sanctioned by a resolution of the Central Committee plenum, held in October of that year, which stipulated their right to "participate in the

[8] The number of private stores, restaurants, and handicraft shops, which increased rapidly soon after October 1956, has been declining since more than a year ago. *(Biuletyn Statystyczny,* Warsaw, No. 7, 1959, and *Tygodnik Demokratyczny,* Warsaw, No. 47, 1959.)

[9] S. Kurowski, "Model a cele" (The Model and the Aims), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 7, 1957, p. 7.

[10] W. Brus, "Pazdziernik, Model Pazdziernikowy" (October, the October Model), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 42, 1957, p. 1.

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management of the enterprise."[11] Piotr Jaroszewicz, one of the party functionaries responsible for economic matters in the Central Committee, declared that it was time "to call into being full-blooded organs of workers' self-management and to grant them legal rights which would guarantee that self-management would become, not window-dressing, but an essential form of management."[12] By the end of 1957, councils had been formed in the overwhelming majority of the enterprises of socialized industry.

Many workers' councils, in the beginning of their existence, displayed what were later called "syndicalist-anarchic" tendencies and evinced little concern for production problems. Wages, piece-rates, bonuses, housing conditions and profit-sharing schemes were at the center of their attention. They sought to control the activities of the director and his staff mainly on matters pertaining to the workers' interest. A provincial party leader, addressing the Third Party Congress in 1959, remarked to his listeners:

If at first the workers' councils did not show any remarkable achievements, this was due to the dissipation of forces and even sometimes to the attempts of the councils to set themselves up in opposition to party organizations and to eliminate workers and party members from their ranks. . . .[13]

THE PARTY lost no time in correcting this state of affairs. First, a concentrated effort was made to infiltrate the workers' councils with active Communists and to gain control of them. Second, the party, after removing some of the more unpopular leaders of the trade unions, sought to reinforce the participation of the unions in plant affairs by bringing the workers' councils under their general supervision. Already in 1957 the arbitrage commissions, established to settle disputes between the councils and higher administrative authorities,[14] were instructed to act in close harmony with the unions, "who were assured a measure of influence in the nomination of the president of the commission."[15]

In April 1958, the Central Congress of Trade Unions resolved that the councils should be subordinated in each enterprise to "conferences of workers' self-management," which would be run jointly by representatives of the councils, of the trade unions, of the plant committee, of the party, and of the factory council (an auxiliary organ of management made up mainly of technical and professional personnel). This resolution was put into effect shortly thereafter, even though several months elapsed before legislation calling the conferences into existence was issued. There had been—as a report to the Third Party Congress stated—some opposition on the part of "elements aiming at plant anarchy, who attacked the statute on workers' self-management as an infringement of workers' rights," but it was quickly squelched.[16]

The division of power between party and trade-union representatives in the conferences is still not quite clear-cut,[17] but the main objective of the reform has been achieved: The councils have been shorn of most of their management and control functions. The effect of these changes on the grassroots popularity of the councils are just those we should have expected. At the 1959 elections for membership in the workers' councils, only one-half to three-quarters of the employes took part in the voting (25 to 30 percent in Warsaw). Less than a quarter of the members of the old councils were re-elected, some of the latter withdrawing "because they saw no opportunity for effective action."[18] The proportion of party members in the councils rose from 30 to 38 percent. The most notable aspect of recent developments, according to the source of this information, is "the fall in the employes' interest in the activities of workers' self-management." The Polish workers' councils, initially at least as influential in plant activities as the Yugoslav councils (which had provided the original pattern for the Polish experiments), are ending up with

[11] Resolution of the Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee, *Nowe Drogi,* No. 10, 1956, p. 6.

[12] Speech to the Eighth Plenum, October 19, 1956, *ibid.* p. 53.

[13] Report of W. Kozdra to the Third Party Congress, *Nowe Drogi,* No. 4, 1959, p. 196.

[14] Any disputes arising between the council and the director of its enterprise were settled by the minister of the industry to which the enterprise was assigned.

[15] J. S., "Rozjemstwo" (Arbitrage), *Gospodarka Planowa,* No. 11, 1957, p. 53.

[16] Report of Ewa Lipinska to the Third Congress, *Nowe Drogi,* No. 4, 1959, p. 423.

[17] According to the decree on workers' self-management of December 1958, "the Central Council of Trade Unions and the relevant trade unions supervise the proper functioning of workers' management and coordinate its activity at the level of the nation and of individual branches of the national economy." (*Dziennik Ustaw,* Warsaw, 1958, No. 77, p. 387.) On the other hand, according to the party secretary of a large enterprise, "the party organization was and is the motor of the conference on workers' self-management." (*Nowe Drogi,* No. 4, 1959, p. 191.) An essential change in article 50 of the statutes of the United Workers' Party is relevant in this connection: The party committee may no longer exercise direct control over the activities of an enterprise; it must henceforth carry out its control and political functions "through participation in the activities of workers' self-management, insuring the proper conjunction of the interests of employes with the interests of the nation as a whole." (*Nowe Drogi,* No. 4, 1959, p. 758.)

[18] J. L. Toeplitz, "KSR po roku" (Conferences of workers' self-management after a year), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 28, 1959, pp. 1 and 3.

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much less power than their Yugoslav counterpart. There is now considerable apprehension in Poland, lest the councils be transformed into local organs of state control, bent on the improvement of plant efficiency rather than on the protection of the workers' welfare.

Partial Administrative Decentralization

The delegation of powers from higher administrative organs to producing enterprises was also stymied by the piecemeal withdrawal of privileges granted in the first months of the Gomulka regime. Prior to November 1956, each year's national economic plan was broken down into a large number of directives, which were, at least in principle, legally binding on the enterprises. The scope of these directives varied from one industry to another, often at the discretion of the central boards of industry, an intermediate administrative organ between the ministry and the enterprise. The directives were usually numerous and pettifogging in detail, leaving managers too little opportunity to develop their own initiative. The decree of November 1956, aimed at "the extension of the rights of nationalized industrial enterprises," limited the directives to eight in number, namely: the total value of the enterprise's marketed output, the quantity of the most important items produced, the total wage fund, the volume of profits (or losses), the part of profits to be turned over to the central budget (or subsidy therefrom), the value of centralized budget-financed investments, a financial limit on capital repairs, and a working-capital fund.[19] Each enterprise worked out its own "industrial-technical-financial plan," treating the directives it received from its central board as minimum assignments. These detailed plans were no longer subjected to the approval of higher authorities.

The erosion of the reform began as early as May 1957 when a ceiling was placed on the total wages that each enterprise might pay to its white-collar staff. This limitation was superimposed on the more general directive concerning the total wage fund for all workers and employes. Then restrictions were placed on the freedom of the enterprise to apportion the profits left at its disposal among different "funds" (housing, decentralized investments, and so on). About the same time, in order to combat the waste of manpower at the plant level, the state imposed separate limits on the employment of industrial workers, of engineering personnel and of two other categories of employes in each nationalized enterprise. Special import and export directives were added in late 1958 and 1959.

The original set of eight directives specified by the 1956 legislation had proliferated to nineteen by mid-1959. Actually, there were still other directives in most industries, which, though they did not have the strength of law, could be enforced fairly effectively by the ministries. A survey showed that two associations in the engineering industry, had received twenty-six directives each.[20]

A recent article published in the popular Polish economic journal *Zycie Gospodarcze,* under the title "Autonomy of the Enterprise in Law and in Practice," cites the unwillingness of superior authorities to revise faulty plans ("They frequently throttle discussion by [their] dogmatic standpoint, and refuse to permit criticism of the plan."), and concludes that in most branches of industry, the system of production planning has remained almost untouched by the decentralization reforms.[21] Despite some recent limitations, it is still in the sphere of financial planning, and particularly in the increased autonomy of the enterprise with respect to the investment of its own profits and depreciation reserves, that decentralization has been most effective. It remains to be seen whether the falling off in the accuracy and coordination of investment and financial plans and the attendant inflationary pressures will not prompt the authorities to curtail further the powers of the enterprise in this domain.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT ASPECT of the industrial decentralization and the strengthening of decision making at the enterprise level was the replacement, in May 1958, of the industrial central boards by new bodies known as "associations" *(zjednozenia).* This measure was the outgrowth of the "theses" of the Commission on the Economic Model, published by the Economic Council in June 1957.[22] Among the important recommendations of the commission was the proposal to create an intermediate agency between the enterprises and the economic ministries, which would no longer simply transmit and parcel out the orders of the Planning Com-

[19] *Monitor Polski,* Warsaw, 1956, No. 94; T. Gradowski, A. Kiernozychi, "Wskazniki dyrektywne planu—a samodzielnosc prezedsiebiorstwa" (Plan directives and the autonomy of the enterprise), *Gospodarka Planowa,* No. 10, 1959, p. 12.

[20] Gradowski and Kiernozycki, *op.cit.* p. 14.

[21] M. Misiak, "Samodzielnosc presedsiebiorstwa w uchwalach i praktyce" (Enterprise Autonomy in Law and in Practice), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 10, 1959, p. 3. S. Kurowski (*op.cit.* p. 4) predicted in early 1957 that the "concessions of the bureaucracy" to the new decentralized system would be 'skin-deep' as long as the administrative character of [production] decisions remained untouched."

[22] "Teze Rady Ekonomicznej" (Theses of the Economic Council), *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 22, 1957, pp. 1-2.

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mission and of the ministries as the central boards had done, but would truly represent the interests of member-enterprises in their dealings with the ministry. To insure this, directors of all associated enterprises were to be made members of the collegium of the association, together with personnel appointed by the ministry.[23] The "theses" suggested that "the scope of activity [of the proposed agencies] and the degree of centralization of their administration should differ according to the concrete requirements of the branch or group of the member-enterprises."

The general lines of the May 1958 statute followed the recommendations of the theses, except for the fact that a single organizational scheme was imposed on the 121 new associations, without regard for "concrete requirements" in the field.

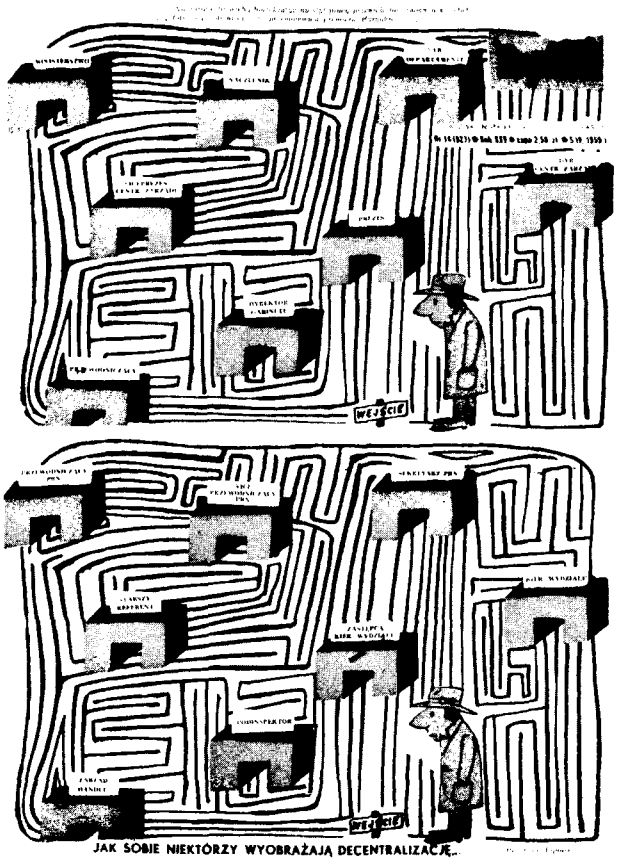
Less than two years have elapsed since the associations came into existence and it is still too early to appraise their significance. Nevertheless, three main trends may be discerned: 1) The associations have taken over many of the operational duties which the ministries exercised prior to 1956 (and which in many cases had already devolved on the central boards before the 1958 reform); 2) the ministries have begun to encroach on the prerogatives of the associations and of their enterprises: the statutes of the Ministry of Light Industry, for example, make it mandatory for the ministry to issue regulations bearing on all detailed aspects of the operations of enterprises, including many which should normally have been left to the associations or to the enterprises themselves; 3) the associations are acting increasingly as agencies of the government representing "the national interest," instead of mediating between the enterprise and its ministry.[24]

In short, the autonomy of the enterprise is not so much constrained by law as it is hemmed in by the discretionary powers still residing in higher organs. For one thing, each unit, from the enterprise up, still depends on its immediate superior for its material allotments and investment quotas. Every good Marxist should realize that this kind of economic power is likely to be wielded unless it is resolutely held in check by the party.

A COMPARISON of the Polish association with its Yugoslav counterpart—the *udruzenie*—whose makeup appears to have influenced the Polish reforms—reveals

[23] A minority of the Council insisted that the workers' councils should also be represented on the collegia.

[24] B. Glinski, "W rok po reorganizacji systemu zarzadzenia" (A year after the reorganization of the management system), *Gospodarka Planowa*, No. 10, 1959, pp. 5-6.



JAK SOBIE NIEKTÓRZY WYOBRAŻAJĄ DECENTRALIZACJĘ...

How Some People Conceive of Decentralization

Caption above: "[Decentralization] isn't a question of simply transferring the bureaucratic style of work, without any changes, to a slightly higher or slightly lower level . . ." From an address by Premier Cyrankiewicz.

(Various official titles at top have been changed to new titles below—e.g., "Ministry" becomes office of the "Chairman," "Chief" becomes "Vice-Chairman," etc.).

—From Szpilki (Warsaw), April 5, 1959.

important differences between the two systems. The principal function of the *udruzenie* is to represent the interests of its members. Since the Yugoslav government has abjurd detailed physical planning and confines itself to the general guidance of the economy by means of financial and fiscal "instruments," the Yugoslav association does not transmit direct orders from higher organs to the enterprise. In several branches of heavy industry, where price controls have been imposed and prices no longer serve effectively as a device for allocating resources, responsibility for rationing basic materials and semifabricates among their members has been vested in the associations. But since there are no detailed

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government plans regulating the total output and the disposal of these goods, the distribution of available supplies can be effected quite informally. This system may not be more equitable; but it at least minimizes outside interference.

Rationality and its Adversaries

The fruits of the Polish October should not be judged merely by the half-hearted attempts at decentralizing the system. Thanks to the removal of dogmatic pressures, a new rational spirit has been breathing through planning organs and economic agencies, which may exert a more beneficial effect on the economy than any partial reforms. The careful weighing of alternatives, economic calculation, and the use of mathematical methods have begun to displace bureaucratic routine and rule-of-thumb planning. Inflated production indexes are no longer taken at face value by the planners themselves. For the first time since Soviet planning methods were adopted in Poland, family budget data have been collected to build up more reliable indexes of the cost of living and of real wages. The frantic pace of planning of the Stalinist period with its unremitting pressure from higher to lower echelons has given way to a more relaxed atmosphere. The Planning Commission concentrates on a smaller range of important commodities and delegates detailed planning tasks to the ministries and to the associations; the loss in overall coordination has been at least in part offset by larger planned reserves and by a higher level of material inventories held by enterprises.

But the most striking changes have taken place in the research activities of the Planning Commission, where qualified economists have been assigned to work on specialized mathematical methods applied to economic planning (input-output and linear-programming) and on long-term planning problems (under M. Kalecki). This research, at least until quite recently, seemed entirely uninhibited by rules or dogma. It will be interesting to see whether such men as Eugeniusz Szyr, Tadeusz Gede, and Julian Tokarski, strong disciplinarians who left their imprint on the Stalinist period and who have now been reinstated to highly influential positions, will tolerate rational planning and objective studies or whether they will insist on setting unrealizable targets (to "mobilize the masses") and on reviving the old "party spirit" in research (to further the ends of internal propaganda).

That the cleavage between the "rationalist forces" and the newly active proponents of "tight plans" and industrialization at any cost remains serious had become apparent during the debate around the Fifteen-Year Plan, scheduled to run from 1961 to 1975. At the Twelfth Central Committee Plenum in October 1958, Eugeniusz Szyr led the "conservative forces"—the partisans of an accelerated pace of industrial expansion—in an assault against the moderate, balanced plans drafted under Kalecki's direction. Against the opposition of "centrists," including Jedrychowski, the president of the Planning Commission, Szyr successfully pressed for a tightening of Kalecki's plans.[25] When Professor Kalecki and his collaborators in the Planning Commission were through incorporating in their long-term plans the revisions enjoined by the party—and they had succeeded, still under fairly reasonable assumptions, in balancing their output targets and their forecasts of productive capacity in the different sectors of the economy—the party resolved to tack on to the 1961-65 phase of the plan an additional investment burden amounting to twenty-four billion zlotys, or five percent of the total volume of investments planned for that period. This was to pay for the accelerated mechanization of agriculture and for the development of the "agricultural circles," a loose form of producers' cooperative, which are expected to pool the tractors and other implements supplied by the state for the joint use of individual farmers.

Whether or not the circles will receive enough spontaneous cooperation from private farmers to put over the program is a moot point; the farmers' fear of being prodded from membership in a circle to membership in a collective farm may be strong enough to make him withhold his support. In any case, the new project was a poorly prepared gamble from the industrial viewpoint. Oskar Lange, speaking before the June 1959 plenum, pointed out that the additional investments called for by the new plan might be relatively modest, but the needs for machinery and equipment were so concentrated in the metal-consuming branches of industry that bottlenecks were likely to arise in this sector if present calculations were not carefully revised.[26] Information available to date indicates that the post-plenum revision of the output targets and of the ma-

[25] Jedrychowski, in answer to Szyr, warned against a return to the policy of 1951-1953, when the economy had been strained by an excessive investment burden: "We all know what is involved in such excessive investments: open or concealed price increases, a drop in real wages, chronic market shortages, *etc.* . . . Do we wish these phenomena to recur? I believe we do not; we cannot tolerate them." Source: *XII Plenum Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej* (Twelfth Plenum of the Central Committee of the United Workers' Party), Warsaw, November 1958, p. 192.

[26] Report to the Second Plenum of the Central Committee, June 22-23, 1959, *Nowe Drogi*, No. 8, 1959, p. 97.

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terial balances underlying the long-term plan has been pretty casual.[27] Kalecki's best-laid schemes may now easily go agley.

The Price System and Economic Reform

What are the prospects for the future? It may be argued that the present trend toward recentralization was made inevitable by the failure to improve the structure of prices in step with the gradual loosening of controls: How could the central authorities rely on value planning, as the planners did in Yugoslavia, when balanced global plans might conceal shortages and surpluses in the supplies of individual commodities? Investment plans, in the aggregate, might be consistent with the budget and the credit plans and with the targets for national income and for individual consumption, but what good would this do if cement and tractors were in deficit supply, or if the part of the national income earmarked for consumption proved unsalable at established prices? Only a system of prices equilibrating supply and demand for each commodity would be sure to forestall these difficulties.[28]

This is where dogma and pragmatic necessity are most at odds. Even the liberal-minded majority of the Economic Council balked at the creation of a free market for producers' goods. They categorically rejected the concept of "spontaneous price-formation beyond the control or the influence of the state."[29] Even though the Council recommended a certain degree of flexibility in price-setting, including limited adjustments to changes in relative scarcities, the reform scheduled for January 1960 is essentially of the same administrative character as previous reforms. Only now, the principles governing the reform make at least passing obeisance to the need for reconciling supply and demand in the long run. Producers' prices are to be raised high enough to eliminate the need for subsidies in all industries; the prices of primary commodities entering foreign trade will be set in reasonable proportion to prices prevailing in world markets; and in industries with a wide range of production costs, such as coal mining, prices will be set somewhat higher than at the industry-wide average in order to reflect cost "at the margin" (*i.e.*, the cost of the most inefficient producers whose plants or mines must still be operated to fulfill the industry's production plan). The main point, however, is that prices will be rigged at their 1960 level for several years. By the time changes in labor productivity and inflationary pressures have worked their differential effect on the costs of the various industries, prices will again be out of line with costs.

Still, it may be expected that the new prices will be much better than the old, which were once privately described by a Polish economist as "practically random." The use of more rational prices will improve the quality of aggregate value planning and of investment calculations made in Polish currency. This will make it possible for the authorities, if they wish to do so, to go a little further toward decentralizing the planning system than they have hitherto. If the decentralizing trend of 1956 and early 1957 is resumed in the beginning of the 1960's, then this will suggest that the recent retrogression was motivated more by the practical difficulties of value planning with irrational prices than by the political nature of the system. On the other hand, the imposition of more pervasive controls would tend to confirm the views of those who hold that the concentration of political power is basically incompatible with the diffusion of economic responsibility.

MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION so far has turned on the efficiency of the Polish "model." But the efficient performance of an economy is not the only criterion of its success or failure. Steady industrial growth or even the systematic improvement of the living standards of the population may be compatible with a good deal of economic waste. Thanks to a more reasonable investment policy and to foreign loans obtained from both East and West, Poland did well with respect to industrial growth and to living standards in the last four years, at least up to the meat shortages of mid-1959, which pruned off a part of the gains in consumption realized after 1956. According to the official index of gross output, industrial growth in recent years has averaged about ten percent annually. Wages, net of taxes, in all socialized enterprises rose a little over 40 percent from mid-1955 to October 1959, compared to an increase of perhaps 12 percent in the cost-of-living index.[30] The apparent 25 percent or so rise in

[27] The indiscriminate overloading of the long-term plans calls to mind the initial stages of the Six-Year Plan when Stalin imposed drastic last-minute changes on Hilary Minc's targets (with disastrous ultimate consequences). It should be noted, however, that both the old and the latest versions of Kalecki's plans have been much more realistically and expertly drawn up than the Minc plans.

[28] In Yugoslavia, prices of a number of important industrial materials have not been set at equilibrium in recent years either. But this deficiency has in part been made up by a more detailed value planning than in Poland, and by a more flexible tax policy, which enable the state to restore some degree of balance in disrupted markets.

[29] "Teze Rady Ekonomicznej," *op.cit.* p. 2.

[30] Based on an appropriate adjustment for the effect on the index of the increase in meat prices of October 1959.

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real wages is almost certainly overstated, if only because the real scarcity of housing is not reflected in the price index and the housing situation is no better than it was three or four years ago. But it is consistent with the substantial improvement in the market supply of consumer goods, particularly of durable goods, which has struck the attention of foreign observers who visited the country both in 1956 and 1959.

Concluding Note

The economic experiments of the last three years were so deeply embedded in Poland's complex politics that they afford little scope for generalizations. Was it the nature of the Communist political system which militated against decentralization? Or did Gomulka wish to liberalize the economy but fail because his economic advisers could not develop instruments of remote control in time to keep the inflationary situation from getting out of hand? These arguments are equally plausible; just as it may also be urged that Gomulka originally had the intention of going ahead with liberalization, but that he was dissuaded from doing so by the representations of Soviet leaders intent on minimizing institutional deviations among the members of the Communist bloc. After all, party activists in Prague or Moscow might find it hard to explain to the staffs of nationalized enterprises chafing under a centralized bureaucratic system that it was all right to have plant autonomy and active workers' councils in next-door Poland, but that such heresies could not be tolerated at home.

Finally, the changing balance of forces within the United Workers' Party may have had a good deal to do with the renewed emphasis on discipline and austerity. As the more liberal elements in the party—including such influential men as W. Bienkowski and J. Morawski—were gradually eased out of power and the party began to lose such credit as it had gained in public opinion during the events of October 1956, there was little recourse left but to rely on the hard core of martinets in the party apparatus, who were happy to substitute disciplinary measures and dictation for the weak incentives and the mild persuasion which had failed to bring out the maximum productive effort from the population. Only time will tell whether these old hands can steer clear of the "mistakes and excesses of the past"; the failure to build automatic controls into the economic system in the last three years and the arbitrariness of recent investment decisions, let alone the new drive for political conformity, hardly augur well for the future.

Hungary's Craving for Normalcy

By Paul Ignotus

MORE THAN THREE YEARS after the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution, the gulf between the Russian-imposed regime and the bulk of the Hungarian population is as wide as ever. But there is one thing about which the people see eye to eye with their rulers: in one way or another, all would like life to become "normal." The government is apparently haunted by the memory of 1956 and spares no effort to prevent a rebirth of the 1956 spirit, oscillating between tactics of greater leniency and administrative repression. The people, on the other hand, are simply tired of dramatic events, disappointed with frustrated hopes, and apathetic about politics. Their major concern has become making money, however possible, and enjoying the modest pleasures afforded by the return to a comparatively normal existence.

This craving for normalcy is reflected in the main achievements of the regime. All labor power possible has been concentrated on rebuilding the city of Buda-

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pest and particularly on removing the traces of battle left by the "counterrevolution." Foreign observers have recently been struck by the tidiness and order of the city, or at any rate its central district.[1] One of the great buildings reconstructed and polished with care is the former Kilian barracks in *Ulloi ut,* the fortress of the freedom fighters led by Pal Maleter, since executed. Though it had served historically and traditionally as a military barracks, it has now been transformed into a block of flats.

Progress—toward Greater Inequality

Living conditions have unquestionably improved, though it is hard to measure the degree of improvement. Statistics, if not all completely faked, are so manipulated to fit propaganda needs that is is impossible to rely on them. Some of the regime's claims were enumerated by the Minister of Labor, Odon Kishazi, in a December speech summarizing the achievements of 1959:

The real wages earned by those living on wages and salaries . . . by the end of 1959 reach, and in some instances even exceed, the amount originally foreseen for the end of the Three-Year Plan in 1960. . . . Nominal wages have increased by 2 to 3 percent. The working hours of some 30,000 working people have been reduced.[2]

That a 2 to 3 percent wage increase does not mean very much, considering the very low income level on which it is based, was admitted by the Minister. He stated that there were other factors improving living conditions but did not make clear what they were; certainly prices have not been reduced.

Everyone moving about in the towns and villages agrees, however, that some modest degree of steady improvement has been noticeable ever since the consolidation of the regime. In towns this is evidenced most clearly by the comparatively greater choice of commodities in shopwindows (although more often than not of very poor quality) and by the large crowds patronizing restaurants, cafe-espressos, and the movie theaters. Every chance is granted to the public to be as "normal" in leisure pursuits as possible. Christmas in particular was used as an occasion to prove that normalcy had at last been achieved, as reflected both in the un-Marxist emotional atmosphere which prevailed and in the seasonal boost to commerce. Previous attempts to play down the importance of Christmas as a religious holiday were abandoned, and a Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Gyula Kallai, even celebrated "Our Christmas" in a headlined article, combining quotations from the Holy Gospel with such commercial data as the following:

This year on the Saturday and Sunday before Christmas, the turnover in the shops of Budapest exceeded by 14.9 percent that of last year. In [the provincial towns of] Gyor, the increase was 25.8 percent; in Debrecen, 21 percent; in Pecs, 23.4 percent; in Szeged, 51.4 percent.[3]

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS are promised for the years ahead, on the basis of the Five-Year Plan adopted at the Seventh Congress of the Hungarian Communist Party (held in Budapest, November 30-December 5). The plan sets forth more reasonable goals than its predecessors, probably reflecting the regime's sensitivity to present popular feeling as well as to past planning blunders—in particular, the disastrous failure to achieve over-ambitious economic goals during the reign of Rakosi and Gero, despite their zealous slave-driving efforts.

The new plan may prove more successful by virtue of its caution. However, authoritative explanations of its provisions reveal that it has a strong tendency to neglect the interests of the average worker and consumer in favor of those serving the regime best. For instance, in an article introducing the plan to the general public, the economic weekly of the Kadar government states:

According to the directing principles, the per capita real income of workers and employes must be increased by at least 26-29 percent . . . and the real income of the peasantry to the same extent.[4]

However, after some fairly vague and involved descriptions of the step-by-step improvements in income to be aimed at during the next seven years, the article adds:

The continuous increase of wages must be tied to the task of introducing wage systems giving a greater incentive. . . . The principles adopted do not aim at increasing the low wages at a greater pace. . . . It is labor requiring greater skill, greater responsibility, *etc.,* which should be better paid.

The article also makes clear that no price reductions of considerable significance can be expected. The im-

[1] *E.g.,* see Douglas Cameron, "As Seen by a Foreigner," and "Eyewitness Reports" by anonymous Hungarian correspondents, in the refugee journal *Irodalmi Ujsag* (The Literary Gazette, London), Oct. 15, 1959; see also photograph of Budapest by Michael Petho, *The Observer* (London), Nov. 29, 1959.

[2] *Nepszava* (Budapest), daily of the party-controlled trade unions, Dec. 25, 1959.

[3] *Nepszabadsag* (Budapest), the official party daily, Dec. 25, 1959.

[4] *Figyelo* (Budapest), Nov. 17, 1959.

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provement of living conditions—to the extent that it is achieved—will thus create a trend toward greater inequality, widening the gap between the living standard of the poorest elements and that of the better-paid layers of society.

Collectivization—Damoclean Sword

From a strictly financial and temporary point of view, rural conditions have been better since the crushing of the revolution than before; since the former system of compulsory delivery of produce has not yet been reintroduced, the peasant small-holders have fared quite well. They eat their chickens and spend their marketing profits more freely—but not in spite of feeling insecure; rather because of it.

That the forceful drive for "collectivization," though suspended earlier this year, will eventually be resumed on an all-out scale is deemed inevitable and awaited with dread. At the beginning of last year, 13 percent of the arable land was owned by state farms and another 13 percent by collectives. By summer the share of the collectives had increased to some 33 percent, leaving the farmers about 54 percent. By the end of 1958 the balance had turned: the collective and state sectors together constituted 55.8 percent of the land in late December and rose to 70 percent by mid-February.

The announcement in February that the collectivization campaign would be generally relaxed was probably motivated in part by the admitted shortage of tractors and other equipment necessary for cooperative farming (see cartoon on this page) and in part by the regime's need for peasant cooperation during the spring planting season. But the peasants can hope for nothing more than a temporary respite. At the Party Congress in December, where problems of agriculture were a primary topic of discussion, the completion of collectivization was cited by Kadar himself as the "decisive task" confronting the party. And reports persist that party cadres are applying harsh pressure against smallholders on a piecemeal, region-to-region basis. One result has been an increased exodus from the land to the cities—about the only form of resistance left to the peasants—reportedly serious enough to have warranted administrative interference in some areas.

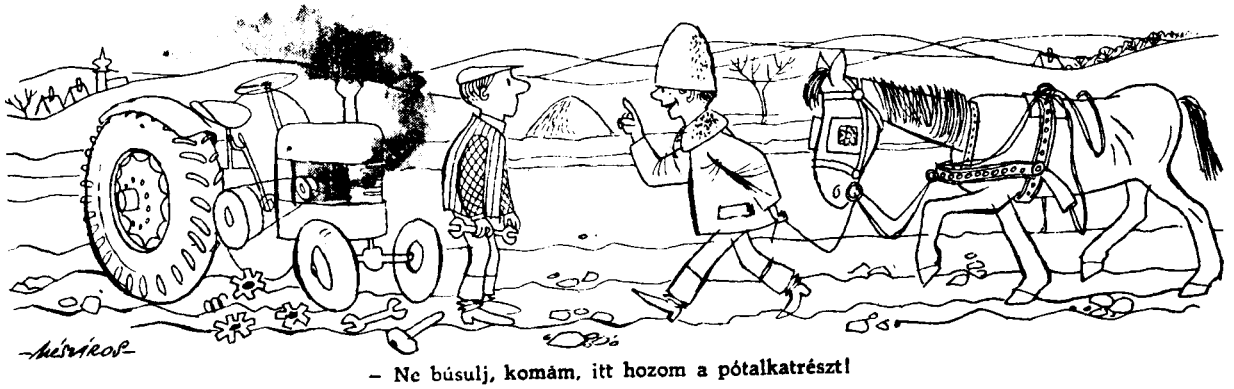
The method adopted to bring about collectivization is called "peaceful persuasion," supposedly distinct from the violent coercive methods used by the Rakosi regime, which is even today denounced as having been "out of touch with the masses." The "peaceful" violence of 1959 was no doubt less spectacular than that of 1949-52. All the same, it was rather frightening. It is reliably reported that party shock-troops raided one or another village by surprise, usually at dusk; they used such methods as cutting off the electric current and then visiting the farmers one by one; whoever was found milking his cow by candlelight was charged with risking fire and threatened with punishment—unless of course he was willing to join the cooperative. Despite the "peacefulness" of such persuasion, many farmers were seen with bleeding foreheads after their arguments with the shock-troopers.[5] The theater of these scenes last year was mainly Transdanubia.

Although spokesmen of the regime have repeatedly denied any intention of reintroducing coercion, they have

[5] See *Irodalmi Ujsag*, Oct. 15, 1959. Description of such methods are from sources whose reliability is considered beyond question.

Ez aztán a gyors-szerviz

Mészáros András rajza



– Ne búsulj, komám, itt hozom a pótalkatrészt!

FAST SERVICE

—Don't be sad, chum; I've brought a spare part!

—*From* Ludas Matyi *(Budapest)*, Nov. 12, 1959.

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announced with assurance that "by 1965 the number of those living on wages and salaries will have increased by 600,000, compared to 1958, as a result of the progress of agriculture on the road to collective farming." [6] Apparently conversions through peaceful persuasion can be counted in advance.

The Convenience of Corruption

The main asset of the present regime seems to be that people, particularly in economic deals, do not observe its regulations. The authorities nonchalantly tolerate corruption in order to keep things going in a "normal" way. The data about increased turnover in shops and cafes may be correct; but such spending certainly does not tally with the far more modest reports of increase in legally-acquired incomes. What do people live on? "On what they get from abroad and on what they pinch," a visitor told me. Indeed, except for the two highly-paid elites—the professional intellegentsia, ranging from opera-singers to surgeons and plant managers, and the high-level bureaucracy of party secretaries, cabinet ministers and security chiefs—no one could possibly make ends meet without being helped either by the capitalist West or by home-made corruption. It is part of the lack of "dogmatism" practiced by the Kadar regime to fill high posts with persons previously labeled as "typically bourgeois racketeers," encouraging them to maintain trade links with the West and to get on as good terms as possible with Western industrialists. On the state and collective farms as well as in shops and factories, practically everybody is out for extra-legal gain through embezzlement, pilfering, and the like. Now and then there are show-trials to prove the necessity of vigilance against corruption, [7] but most people risk arrest without hesitation.

Parcels sent to Hungarians by relatives in other countries have heretofore amounted to a very considerable proportion of the Hungarian national income, but the Kadar regime has adopted an increasingly stiff attitude toward them. At the beginning of 1957, every sort of help was welcomed, even individual aid from politically-tainted émigrés to so-called "counterrevolutionaries" at home. Later, duties were imposed on commodities sent in gift parcels, and subsequently raised to an almost prohibitive level. The aim was to force Western relatives of Hungarians to make greater use of governmental channels of aid, which enable the regime to get hold of hard currency. Under the official IKKA scheme, anyone is allowed to pay cash for unlimited quantities of goods without charge for duty, but at prices which allow the Hungarian state to keep about 60 to 80 percent of the money paid in by the sender.

At the end of last year, a campaign was launched against the senders of relief parcels, accusing them of acting as agents of foreign imperialists whose aim is to turn the population against the Hungarian government. In particular, the well-known Social-Democratic leader Anna Kethly, Minister of State in the Imre Nagy coalition government, was accused of initiating efforts to undermine the Hungarian peoples' democracy by seeming acts of charity. [8] Evidence suggests that Hungarians are politically indifferent to such propaganda though they may well feel fear that recipients of parcels will be blacklisted and eventually persecuted.

1848 and 1956

Politically, the Hungarian scene has consolidated, initiating a new phase of stale conformism. In the past there were rumors of internecine strife between the "Centrists" on the one hand, headed by Janos Kadar and Ferenc Munnich (respectively First Party Secretary and Chairman of the Council of Ministers), and the "Leftists" on the other, including Antal Apro (First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers) and Arpad Kiss (Chairman of the National Planning Office). The latter group reportedly was trying to remove the former from the top leadership. It is difficult to guess what the precise differences were between them, since it was doubtless the Kremlin which dictated the prevailing policy of a "simultaneous fight against dogmatism and revisionism" (which in fact meant persecution only of so-called revisionists, since the dogmatists, defined as advocates of the Rakosi line, had long since ceased to declare themselves in public). The real difference between the two factions was perhaps one of degree: Kadar carried out Moscow's orders for repression obediently, but without showing any great pleasure in doing so, while Apro and his close circle seemed to favor repressive measures with a vengeance even while supporting the "anti-dogmatist" line.

In any event it seems clear that Kadar now has the firm upper hand within the party. [9] His position has

[6] *Figyelo,* Nov. 17, 1959.

[7] *E.g.,* see report on "Inefficient Supervision—Embezzling of Several Hundred Thousand Forints," *ibid.,* Nov. 24, 1959.

[8] "So They Betray the Fatherland," *Nepszabadsag,* Dec. 25, 1959.

[9] This seems indicated by some of the changes in top governmental personnel since the Party Congress (reported, *i.a.,* in *Nepszabadsag,* Jan. 16, 1960). Most important is the appointment of Gyula Kallai, considered a Kadar supporter, as First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, making him in effect the successor of the aged Premier Dr. Munnich.

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been immeasurably boosted by demonstrations of support from Moscow, manifested most recently when Khrushchev attended the Hungarian Party Congress.

The main aim of Khrushchev's visit, however, was far more interesting than his helpful hand to Kadar: he wanted to demonstrate Soviet-Hungarian solidarity in an effort to write off the issue of the Hungarian revolution, talk of which, as will be remembered, provoked his extreme temper while he was visiting the United States. The Soviet Premier's performance in Budapest started with a moderate, markedly statesmanlike and "coexistentionalist" speech at the Party Congress on December 1, when he had a good word to say for all his Western colleagues except Dr. Adenauer. But the following day, when talking more informally to the workers of the MAVAG factory, he demonstrated his penchant for rash statements when he disclosed that at the time of the Hungarian uprising, opinion in the Kremlin had been divided about whether to interfere. This had always been suspected, but the admission came as a surprise and no one really knows what may have prompted the Soviet Premier to confirm the fact. The apologia he put out for the eventual Soviet intervention was certainly ill-advised if it was aimed at winning over Hungarian opinion. He said:

Comrades! At the time of the revolution of 1848, when the Hungarian people was struggling for its national liberation against the army of the Austrian emperor, Franz Josef, the Russian Tsar, Nicholas I, did not hesitate for a moment to interfere in the internal affairs of the Hungarian people. Seeing that the throne of Franz Josef was shaken, he sent his army to crush the Hungarian revolution. . . . How then could we, the working classes and the working people of the Soviet Union, whose troops were stationed on Hungarian soil under the Warsaw agreement, tolerate the annihilation of the Hungarian people's power. . . .?[10]

All that he added about the Fascist and imperialist character of the Hungarian "counterrevolution" was mere repetition of slogans; but in his extemporaneous analogy of 1956 with the Russian Tsarist interference of 1848-49, he offered a confirmation to be savored by those "whispering propagandists" who had always claimed that Tsarist and Bolshevik imperialism did not substantially differ.

The Course Ahead

The Congress caused great disappointment to many who had hoped for an announcement that Soviet troops would be withdrawn from Hungary. Kadar's declaration that this was out of the question for the time being and that "Soviet troops will remain in Hungary as long as the international situation requires" was a bitter pill to swallow. He added further gall by emphasizing that even after the withdrawal of the troops the present system of administration, with its strengthened and reorganized security forces, would remain unchanged.[11]

Even more indicative of the political course ahead was the speech of Vice-Premier Kallai, who has come to be recognized as the "chief ideologist" in Hungary. While carefully refraining from attacks on the non-Communist great powers, he was harsh in blaming the Hungarian Writers' Association and Petofi Circle (of young intellectuals) for the "counterrevolution" of 1956. He welcomed the prospect of peaceful coexistence, but added:

In the period of peaceful coexistence, we must strengthen the fight against every manifestation of bourgeois ideology. . . . We must get rid of revisionist thinking in every way. . . . Art and literature must become party-minded. . . .[12]

The essence of the policy adopted during and since the Seventh Party Congress can be summed up like this: courtesy toward foreigners, tact toward conservative emotional tradition, leniency toward bourgeois money-making techniques, but unrelenting intolerance against any trends to liberalize communism at home, and perpetuated persecution of the "revisionist" intellectuals held responsible for such trends in the past.

New Palliatives

The reaction of the population to recent developments is one of contempt and hatred for the regime; but also one of an apathy mitigated, as far as possible, by a happy-go-lucky spirit. Many people try to save up money to buy a car or a television set, which are still luxury goods in Hungary, though not so entirely out of reach as before. Private ownership of cars was until recently a privilege for which permission was needed; the extension of this right to the public at large was a great concession by the government—or in official parlance, a battle won in its "fight against dogmatism."

Another such concession (or battle won) was to put an end to the persecution of church-goers. No far-reaching or solid settlement has yet been brought about between the state and the Roman Catholic Church, and the fact that Cardinal Mindszenty, an arch-enemy of

[10] *Nepszabadsag,* Dec. 3, 1959.

[11] Kadar's speech of Nov. 30, *ibid.,* Dec. 1, 1959.

[12] *Elet es Irodalom* (Budapest), weekly of the reorganized Hungarian Writers' Association, Dec. 4, 1959.

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communism, is still enjoying the hospitality of the US Legation in Budapest cannot fail to remind party bosses and ordinary people alike of the deep cleavage that continues to divide the Kremlin and the Vatican. Nevertheless, anti-religious and even anti-Catholic propaganda has been conspicuously soft-pedaled in Hungary. The acting head of the Roman Catholic Church, Archbishop Grosz, and several other high-ranking priests have been awarded distinctions in recognition of their "services to peace"; and the "peace priests" proper, though on very uneasy terms with the rest of priesthood, seem willing enough to advertise the popularity of the latter—at least they have boasted of the "churches being packed" in talking to Western journalists.[13]

Broken Resistance

The writers and other intellectuals, whose refusal to toe the line has haunted and still goes on haunting the Hungarian Communist leaders, seem to have made such accommodation as most of them thought wise or unavoidable. On September 25, 1959, the Hungarian Writers' Association, banned after the reoccupation by Soviet forces, was reorganized on "party-minded" lines. Its "unanimously" elected Board was stacked, as could be expected, with an overwhelming majority of literary *apparatchiki*. Yet most of the important writers were induced, if not to attend the meeting, at least to send a telegram of greeting.

In a recent article this writer described the three modern trends in literature which have most plagued the regime and the efforts it has made to counteract them—to win over by threats and cajolement the "populists" or "folkwriters"; partly to bury and partly to expropriate the heritage of the "urbanizers," or the non-Communist Left; and to discredit the "revisionists" either by expelling them from cultural life altogether or by compelling them to deliver public "self-criticisms" in a manner sufficiently humiliating to destroy their prestige.[14] Owing to the general atmosphere of apathy, these efforts have to some extent been successful.

A symbolic act from this point of view was the visit of the important and gifted "populist" author, Laszlo Nemeth, to Moscow, during and since which he has paid several tributes to Soviet culture.[15] The regime has given considerable publicity to such manifestations of faltering resistance. At the same time the Communist controlled trade-union daily, *Nepszava,* originally the mouthpiece of the Social Democratic Party, has started a literary supplement named *Szep Szo* (meaning "Beautiful Word" or "Argument") which before the war was the title of a literary magazine edited by "urbanizers," chiefly the late poet Attila Jozsef.

Some very few writers of these two groups, and far more from among the "revisionists," are still conspicuous for their silence. It is hard to decide where this is due to the writers' being blacklisted, and where to their carrying on with the "sit-down strike"; but that in some cases, at any rate, it is the perseverance of writers which bars them from reentering the literary arena can be seen from Kallai's remark in his speech at the Party Congress:

There are still some few writers—but no longer more than a very few—who have up to now lacked the moral courage to face their own past mistakes and who have thus expelled themselves from the living, alive, and healthily progressing [sic] Hungarian literature.[16]

A Case for Amnesty

The saddest aspect of the anti-revisionist nightmare is the continued imprisonment of leading authors, scholars and journalists,[17] as well as of masses of nameless youth, mainly former students and workers. During the last half of 1959, numerous rumors reached other countries of executions either carried out or to take place in Hungary; many of these reports remain unsubstantiated but at least eight proved to be true. As long as the present system of security is in force, it would be futile to estimate their number. A British woman journalist, who shocked readers with some of her remarks favorable to the Kadar regime, wrote in this connection:

"Socialist legality" did not help me [in Budapest] to obtain answers to two plain questions I put to every senior Communist official I met: "How many people have been executed since 1956? How many political prisoners are still in jail?"[18]

[13] See report in *The Observer,* Dec. 20, 1959. The "peace priests" are a relatively small group of clericals who since the early 1950's have given active political support to the Communist regime. Their defiance of a Vatican decree of 1957 proscribing priests' participation in political activities led to their excommunication the following year; nevertheless they continue to carry on clerical duties with the support of the regime, though they are unrecognized by the rest of the clergy.

[14] "Hungarian Intellectuals Under Fire," *Problems of Communism,* No. 3 (May-June), 1959.

[15] *E.g.,* his "toast" at the gathering of the Soviet Writers' Union, reprinted in *Elet es Irodalom,* Oct. 23, 1959.

[16] *Ibid.,* Dec. 4, 1959.

[17] *E.g.,* the novelist Tibor Dery, the playright Gyula Hay, the young writers Gali and Obersovszky. Among those who were not Communist Party members, there are the legal historian Istvan Bibo, the labor leader Istvan Erdei, and many others.

[18] Nora Beloff, "Kadar's Hungary," Part II, *The Observer,* Dec. 20, 1959.

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It was such acts of revenge and the practice of repression which seem to have prompted Sir Leslie Munro's report on Hungary, on the grounds of which the United Nations once again condemned the Soviet and Hungarian governments for their refusal to cooperate in the implementation of the UN Charter. Some persons reported disparaging remarks made by Hungarian citizens on that occasion, to the effect that "We have had enough of resolutions." But according to the writer's information most of them would add: ". . . though of course a resolution is still better than nothing."

Toward the regime, at any rate, the Hungarians' state of mind is likely to remain as it has been described in this paper—an admixture of contempt and hatred tempered by apathy and indifference—unless and until repression gives way to a genuine effort to pacify the nation. A political amnesty would not be sufficient in this respect, but would be an important step in the right direction. April 4 of this year—the 16th anniversary of Hungary's liberation from the Nazis—will provide the next conventional date when the Hungarian government might, Moscow permitting, prove that it no longer fears the power of silenced writers and disarmed youngsters, the hapless prisoners who have now been kept under lock and key for some three years.

TRUTH AND CIRCUMSTANCES . . .

. . . Kadar and the October Revolution

I wish to make it clear that all today's decisions by the Council of Ministers [to abolish the one-party system and reconstitute a coalition of democratic parties] were taken with the full approval of the Presidium of the Hungarian Workers' Party, and I would add that I am in complete agreement with the remarks just made by my friend Imre Nagy.—*Kadar as a member of Nagy's cabinet, Radio Kossuth, Oct. 30, 1956.*

In a glorious uprising, the people have overthrown the Rakosi regime. They have won for our country the freedom and independence without which there can be no socialism. We can assert with confidence that the authors of the uprising were drawn from our ranks. It was the Communists, writers, journalists, and students, the young people of the Petöfi Circle, the workers and peasants in their thousands, and the veteran militants unjustly imprisoned, who formed the spearhead against Rakosi's despotism and gangster politics. We are proud of you, for you took your proper place in the armed uprising. You were imbued with true patriotism and loyalty towards socialism. . . .—*Kadar announcing the dissolution of the old Communist Party and formation of a new one, Radio Kossuth, Nov. 1, 1956.*

In order to settle this affair, the Hungarian Government, in conformity with the proposal contained in the Yugoslav Government's letter to me of 18 November 1956, repeats herewith the assurance already given several times by word of mouth that it has no desire to punish Imre Nagy and the members of his group in any way for their past activities.—*Kadar in a note to the Yugoslav Government, quoted in* The Truth about the Nagy Affair, *F. A. Praeger, New York, 1959, p. 12.*

The success of the counterrevolutionary attack was due to the treason of the Nagy-Losonczy group of renegades. Under cover of correcting errors, they tried to destroy the party and, by allying themselves with the forces of blackest reaction, they played into the hands of counterrevolution . . . by their work of treason and disintegration they paralyzed the forces of the party and the state, which were loyally defending the socialist cause.—*Kadar speaking in Moscow,* Nepszabadsag, *March 28, 1957.*

We are in complete agreement [with the Russians] as regards the role played by the traitors of the Nagy-Losonczy group.—*Kadar statement after his return from Moscow,* Nepszabadsag, *April 2, 1957.*

The judicial authorities have concluded the proceedings in the case of the leading group of individuals who, with the active cooperation of the imperialists, precipitated an armed counterrevolutionary uprising on October 23, 1956, designed to overthrow the legal order of the Hungarian People's Republic. . . .

The court therefore sentenced Imre Nagy to death . . . [Three others were also sentenced to death, and five more to prison terms from five years to life. Losonczy died in prison.] The death sentences have been carried out.—*Communiqué of the Hungarian Ministry of Justice, June 17, 1958.*

Imre Nagy, the traitor to his country, and his group followed the road of factionalism within the party up to abandoning the workers' power and to soliciting the interference of the imperialists. We had to break radically with the traitors and level guns at them.—*Kadar at the Seventh Party Congress, Radio Budapest, Nov. 30, 1959.*

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The "Classless Society"

EDITORS' NOTE: Among the changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death, and particularly since Khrushchev's assumption of power, two trends —seemingly contradictory, yet essentially complementary in character—emerge in sharp relief. One is the trend toward a partial lowering of the rigid social and economic barriers that separated the distinctly privileged from the distinctly unprivileged in Stalin's "socialist" society; the other has been the tendency toward gradual enhancement of the position of the Communist Party in all spheres of public life.

These two trends form the subject matter of the articles below. In the first, Mr. Feldmesser traces the progress as well as the limitations of the process of "social undifferentiation," and offers a provocative explanation of its causes. In the second, Mr. Bialer provides a somewhat different interpretation of recent Soviet developments in this area (particularly with regard to agriculture); the bulk of his article, however, is concerned with the intricate relationship between the seemingly increased emphasis on egalitarianism on the one hand, and the simultaneous strengthening of what has come to be the *ruling stratum in Soviet society—the* apparat *of the Communist Party, the thin layer of political officials exercising unlimited power over the 200 million inhabitants of the USSR.*

Elsewhere in this issue the reader will find other items relating to the general topic of Messrs. Feldmesser's and Bialer's articles: the book reviews (pp. 51-58), and the Notes and Views *section, which features articles on the role of the Communist Party in education and journalism respectively. Future issues will carry further detailed reports on the current status of workers and peasants, as well as up-to-date surveys of the activities and prerogatives of Russia's new rulers.*

Equality and Inequality under Khrushchev

By Robert A. Feldmesser

A GREAT DEAL HAS BEEN written on the emergence of gross inequalities of wealth, privilege, and official honor in Soviet society. The process, fully described and documented, may be said to have begun with a famous speech by Stalin in 1931, in which he denounced "equality-mongering" in the wage structure and called for a new attitude of "solicitude" toward the intelligentsia; it manifested itself in highly differentiated incomes, in a change in the composition of the Communist Party, in the establishment of tuition fees and other more subtle obstacles to higher education, in elegant uniforms and elaborate titles, and in a host of other ways. By the end of World War II, and particularly during the last years of Stalin's life, the trend was clear: The Soviet Union was well advanced along a seemingly irreversible course toward a rigid system of social stratification, in which the upper classes would remain upper, the lower classes lower, and the twain would rarely meet.

Yet the irreversible has now been reversed. With that breathtaking facility which so often startles us, the Soviet

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leadership has launched a series of measures calculated to reduce the degree and rigidity of differentiation in Soviet society to a very considerable extent. Many observers have not yet fully apprehended this turn of events, if only because all its component parts had not been assembled in one place: to do so is one objective of the present study. But partly, too, the lack of comprehension is due to a reluctance to credit Soviet leaders with the desire or ability to achieve so "virtuous" an aim as social equality —or rather, it is due to a failure to appreciate the *meaning* of equality in the Soviet system. A second objective here is to define that meaning.

The "Revival of Democracy"

[He] began to trample crudely on the methods of collectivity in leadership . . . to order people around and push aside the personnel of Soviet and economic organizations . . . [He] decided questions great and small by himself, completely ignoring the opinions of others.

[He] flattered himself with the belief that all [improvements] were due only to his own merits. The more successfully things went, the more conceited he became, the more airs he gave himself.

. . . you get the impression that everything other people do is bad, and only the things [he] does are good.

These scathing remarks could well have been taken from Khrushchev's secret speech to the 20th Congress of the CPSU exposing the incredible extremes to which Stalin's method of one-man rule had gone. A common reaction to this speech abroad was to see in it a confirmation of the trend toward inequality. The intelligentsia, or the "state bourgeoisie," [1] despite their privileges *vis-à-vis* other elements of the population, had long resented the Stalinist tyranny. Now, as a result of their increasing power in an industrialized and militarized state, they had reached the point where they could force Khrushchev to confess that they had been unjustly treated, to promise them the freedom of decision-making, and to guarantee the security of their status.

Subsequent comments in the Soviet press have belied this interpretation. The quotations do not come from the secret speech; they are attacks on, respectively, a *raion* party secretary, the chairman of a city soviet executive committee, and a factory director.[2] For, as it now appears, the secret speech was directed not only at the one big Stalin, but also at all the other little Stalins who had grown up in his image. It has been followed up not with praise for Soviet administrators, but with denunciations of *"administrirovanie"*—the high-handed, arrogant ways of officials who have exercised "petty tutelage" over their subordinates; who have glossed over shortcomings, suppressed criticism, and persecuted their critics; who have been "inattentive to the workers and their needs;" who have, in short, violated the letter of Soviet law and the spirit of "Communist morality."

Denunciations of this sort are not, of course, a new phenomenon; but what is interesting today is not only the frequency of such attacks but the implicit admission that the inspiration for bad administrative habits came from very high up. Accordingly, Khrushchev's own behavior, so sharply at variance with Stalin's, has been held up as an example for others to follow: Soviet officials have been urged to get closer to the people, to pay more attention to them, and not to rely exclusively on existing channels of authority. Sessions of local soviets are being held more frequently; there have been occasional reports of ministers and department heads being subjected to questioning by deputies; in some instances, agendas of meetings have been posted and public hearings held on the items under discussion. The number of deputies in local soviets has been increased by 1,800,000, and unpaid activists have been taking on tasks formerly performed by the executive staff—as if housewives were indeed to run the state.[3] Along the same lines, there has been a large-scale effort to reinvigorate the system of worker and peasant correspondents, to protect them from reprisals by the targets of their criticism, and to have them do more of the newspapers' work in place of the professional journalistic staff.[4] A party journal has told *raion* newspapers that they were not limited to criticizing "only rank-and-file workers and 'second-rank' officials of *raion* organizations." [5]

The appeal for "popular participation" to reform the deeply ingrained bureaucratic habits of Soviet officialdom has even been extended to the party-controlled trade unions, which have been urged to shake off their submissiveness to factory executives and to offer vigorous opposition when necessary.[6] Instances of rambunctious local trade-union committees have been held up for

[1] The term is Hugh Seton-Watson's, in an article presenting this interpretation: "The Soviet Ruling Class," *Problems of Communism,* No. 3 (May-June), 1956.

[2] Respectively in *Pravda,* Nov. 23, 1957, and *Izvestia,* Jan. 16, 1958, and June 13, 1959. These are samples from a plethora of similar articles.

[3] See especially the editorial in *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo,* No. 3 (May), 1956, pp. 3-14; *Izvestia,* May 22 and 23, Oct. 12, and Nov. 24, 1957; Aug. 1, 1958; and May 24, 1959.

[4] *Pravda,* June 8, 1959, and many earlier sources. This matter as well as the treatment of readers' letters were the subjects of Central Committee resolutions: *Pravda,* Aug. 26, 1958, and *Izvestia,* Oct. 11, 1958.

[5] *Partiinaia Zhizn,* No. 14 (July), 1959, p. 55.

[6] Report to the 20th Congress, *Pravda,* Feb. 15, 1956.

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emulation, and workers enjoined to criticize "without being afraid that it will upset some director or other," and without having their remarks "prepared" or "cleared" by higher authorities.[7]

Another indication of the new spirit, antedating the 20th Congress, has been the abolishment of the uniforms, insignia or rank, and titles which had been authorized for many civilian occupations during and after the war.[8] There has been an appeal for more informal relations and less social distance between those of high rank and those of low, and for an end to such practices in the armed forces as separate dining rooms for the several ranks.[9]

In general, the party seems to have been going out of its way to assert its respect for "ordinary" workers and peasants, a development reminiscent, as are many aspects of this campaign, of the attitude prevailing during the first decade after the October Revolution. Reversing a trend of more than 20 years' duration, the party has made a deliberate attempt to recruit more workers and peasants into its ranks: so much so, that Khrushchev was able to report at the 21st Congress that two-thirds of current admissions were in those categories, a figure which he accurately called a "considerable increase." [10] In addition, the Soviet press has published numerous editorials, articles, and letters passionately proclaiming the honor and worth of manual labor in a socialist society, filled with glowing words about citizens who are not afraid of soiling their hands, who are "creating material values for the people," rather than "sitting in offices and filing papers." While this line of propaganda is not new, it has never been pursued so intensely. Indeed, it almost appears that the traditional trinity of "workers, collective farmers, and intelligentsia" has been replaced by a duad of the first two classes, so great has been the new stress on the "Soviet toilers."

The rights and privileges mentioned thus far may seem to be only honorific. To be sure, they do not signify any real diffusion of the locus of power in Soviet society. Nevertheless, their importance should not be underrated: they do, after all, attempt to raise the ordinary worker's self-respect, and to imbue him with the consciousness—denied to him under Stalin—of his own contribution to the country's industrial progress.

[7] *Pravda,* July 11, 1959; see also *Izvestia,* June 25, 1957.

[8] Decree of July 12, 1954, in *Sbornik Zakonov SSSR i Ukazov Prezidiuma Verkhovnovo Soveta SSSR,* Moscow, 1959, pp. 411-13.

[9] *Krasnaia Zvezda,* Aug. 21, 1957.

[10] *Pravda,* Jan. 28, 1959. See also T. H. Rigby, "Social Orientation of Recruitment and Distribution of Membership in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," *American Slavic and East European Review,* No. 3 (October), 1957.

A "NEGATIVE" TYPE

Production Gymnastics

—Stretch your arms forward . . . then quickly bend down. Since you have to straighten out anyway, get hold of this girder. . . . Carry it to the other shop, and don't forget to breathe out.

—From Krokodil (Moscow), Sept. 30, 1959.

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Having for years been exposed to harassment, incessant exhortations, and an attitude on the part of the authorities bordering on contempt, he is not likely to scorn even this—however mild—token of recognition and respect.

Adjustments in the Income Structure

In any event, more tangible rewards have also resulted from the new policy. Although we need not take too literally all of the promises made by Khrushchev—and by Malenkov before him—to increase the output of consumers' goods, there is every indication that the lowest-paid Soviet workers and peasants have been placed in a better competitive position to buy whatever is available.

On the one hand, minimum wages were raised in 1956, and two more increases scheduled in the current plan will bring the wage floor up to 500-600 rubles a month by 1965—hardly a level of luxury, but approximately twice what it is now; raises have also been promised to "medium-paid workers, and employees."[11] Old-age and disability pensions have been increased, too. Income taxes have been revised in favor of the lowest income brackets.[12]

On the other hand, there has been a good deal of talk, and some action, aimed at reducing the incomes of managerial and scientific personnel. In particular, the awarding of lavish bonuses to administrative, party, and other officials has been repeatedly attacked, and it is almost certain that the worst abuses are being corrected, "voluntarily" if not otherwise. A decree of the Council of Ministers has warned against excessive expense accounts on *komandirovki* (business trips)—another common source of added income for economic staffs.[13] Sputniks notwithstanding, the scientists have come in for their share of criticism, too, for holding multiple jobs and for receiving high incomes "merely" because they have higher degrees.[14]

The range of differentiation is being contracted not only between manual and nonmanual workers, but within the manual group as well. Wages in a number of industries have been sporadically revised over the past five years, the guiding principle being "a rise in the proportion of basic wage rates in workers' earnings." Although the primary motives seemed to be economic and bookkeeping concerns—to restrain inflationary forces and restore simplicity to the wage structure—it was implied that many of the premiums and increments which had permitted the rise of an inner aristocracy among the workers would be curtailed or eliminated. It has now been authoritatively stated that greater equality of wages is a deliberate intention. A. Volkov, who succeeded Kaganovich as head of the Committee on Labor and Wages, has declared that, "with the aim of decreasing the gap between maximum and minimum wage rates," such measures as these are to be undertaken: a reduction in the number of skill categories and in the ratio between the highest and lowest rates to "no more than" two to one; a "sharp" decrease in the use of progressive piecework rates; and a replacement of individual bonuses by collective bonuses, spreading the benefits of a single worker's accomplishment to his whole work team.[15]

Rural Remedies

Even more striking have been the changes in the agricultural sector. Adjustments in crop-purchase prices and agricultural taxes and other steps taken since 1953 have raised the income of collective farmers in general while diminishing the range of earnings among and within the collectives.[16] On several occasions, Khrushchev has referred to the "excessively high incomes" of some collective farms (as he has to the "unjustifiably high incomes" of some workers). One remedy, analogous to the industrial wage reform, has been the establishment of a uniform pricing system for agricultural purchases, without bonuses for exceeding the purchase plan, with the result, according to Khrushchev, that "many collective farms will undoubtedly get more, while the leading collective farms will receive . . . somewhat less than now. And this," he added, "will be entirely fair."[17] Especially interesting is his implicit denial of the principle laid down by Stalin in 1931: that wide income differentials were needed as incentives to raise production. Khrushchev, on the contrary, has asserted that the farms with low income due to poor production are discouraged from increasing their output:

> **. . . collective farms that did not achieve the planned harvest . . . were penalized, as it were. . . . This, of course, did not spur them on. . . . The goal here must be a more correct determination of pay . . . in order to provide**

[11] *Pravda,* Sept. 9, 1956, and Nov. 14, 1958.

[12] *Sbornikzakonov* . . . , pp. 505-506.

[13] *Izvestia,* April 4 and June 6, 1959.

[14] *Kosomolskaia Pravda,* March 20 and April 6, 1956; *Pravda,* July 2, 1959.

[15] *Pravda,* Nov. 25, 1958. At the 21st Congress, Khrushchev remarked that it was also time to eliminate the differential paid for work in remote places: *Pravda,* Feb. 1, 1959. Premiums evidently will be preserved for hot or underground jobs and hard physical labor.

[16] Lazar Volin, "Reform in Agriculture," *Problems of Communism,* No. 1 (Jan.-Feb), 1959.

[17] *Pravda,* June 21, 1958.

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incentive not only to the leading but to all collective farms.[18]

In connection with the shift, now apparently underway, from payment by workdays to guaranteed cash payments, the whole problem of income differentiation in agriculture was recently discussed in three articles in the *Soviet Union's leading economic journal.* Among situations they cited as "unjustifiable" are: income differentials among collective farms due to varying locations, soil fertility, or crops; those between peasants and farm executives, due to the closer linking of peasant earnings to the volume of output; and those among the peasants themselves, due to too many pay-rate categories with too steep increases, and to inequitable discrepancies in output norms. The remedies are fairly obvious, and cases are cited in which they are already being applied.[19]

Reform in Education

The school system initiated in the 1930's was one of the major props of social differentiation. Its salient features, for present purposes, were these: Seven years of education were nominally compulsory, although it has been revealed that as late as 1958 only 80 percent of the young people were completing the course.[20] After the seven-year school, a youngster might: (1) go to work in a job requiring little or no skill; (2) be drafted into a labor-reserves school, providing training of up to two years for occupations of moderate skill; (3) enter a *tekhnikum,* a three- or four-year school for highly-skilled manual and some nonmanual occupations; or (4) proceed to the upper grades of a ten-year school for essentially "academic" training, preparatory in almost all cases to matriculation at a higher educational institution (*vuz*). Tuition fees were charged in the *vuzes,* ten-year schools and *tekhnikums.* Scholarships were available at *tekhnikums,* while room, board, and uniforms were free in the labor-reserves schools, but no such aids were offered to pupils of the ten-year school. For both material and "cultural" reasons, therefore, the tendency was for children from lower-status families to attend the vocational schools and enter the same sort of occupations already held by their parents, while children of the "elite" were more likely to take the academic sequence preparing them for professional and administrative positions. The greater informal influence which highly-placed parents could exercise on those responsible for *vuz* admission strengthened this tendency. The schools thus contributed to the cleavage between manual and nonmanual groups.

The decision, adopted at the 19th Congress and reaffirmed at the 20th, to implement universal ten-year education wreaked havoc with this arrangement. Since ten-year schooling was to be compulsory, tuition fees made little sense, and they were accordingly abolished.[21] On the other hand *vuz* enrollments were not expanded; most of the ten-year graduates were expected to go directly to work, or into *tekhnikums* or other vocational schools.[22] This meant, in turn, a revision of the ten-year-school curriculum: physical education, music, art, mechanical drawing and other "practical studies," were increased at the expense of academic courses, and the latter were simplified in content, with fewer examinations and less homework. The effect of these changes—again in part intended—was to make school more accessible and more comfortable for the children of workers and peasants, improving their chances for scholastic success; and to blur the distinction between education for the manual worker and education for his occupational and social superior.

New Problems and a New Program

But the reform proved unsatisfactory in important respects. In particular, graduates of the ten-year schools clung to the idea that they were entitled to a higher education. Many of them resented going either to work or to a vocational school, preferring to wait until they could gain admission to a *vuz*—and this in the face of an imminent labor shortage caused by the birth deficiencies of the war years. One attempt at solving this problem was the campaign, referred to above, stressing anew the dignity of manual labor; but it proved futile. Khrushchev then struck boldly: rejecting the ten-year principle, he declared that eight years of education were all that was necessary, and that such training should be "close to life"—*i.e.,* primarily vocational. He proclaimed a "sacred slogan": "All students must prepare for useful work" and take a full-time job upon completion of the eighth grade.

This . . . will be democratic since more equal conditions will be created for all citizens: neither the position nor the

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] *Voprosy Ekonomiki,* No. 2 (Feb.), 1959, pp. 80-88, 113-22, 143-49. In addition, see *Izvestia,* Nov. 30, 1958, in which a collective farm chairman reports that his own earnings now vary according to the volume of output, but are not to exceed 1500 rubles a month.

[20] *Literaturnaia Gazeta,* July 3, 1958. Khrushchev has used this figure on several occasions.

[21] *Izvestia,* June 10, 1956.

[22] Nicholas DeWitt, "Upheaval in Education," *Problems of Communism,* No. 1 (Jan.-Feb.), 1959.

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pleas of parents will exempt anyone, whoever he may be, from productive labor. . . .[23]

This program met two related goals: a labor force would be trained, in a minimum amount of time, for the kind of work that would be the lot of most;[24] and the notion of an automatic transition from secondary school to higher education would be dispelled. The purpose and atmosphere of the new type of school are suggested by the fact that pupils will combine their studies with productive work and with such chores as cleaning classrooms, tending shrubbery, and preparing and serving lunches. After the educational overhaul is completed, in three to five years, all students who wish to receive full secondary schooling (now to be of eleven years' duration)[25] will do so by correspondence or in evening or off-season schools, without taking time away from their jobs. Although there was much discussion of schools for the "gifted," which would not require students to work while studying, it is significant that no provision was made for them (except in the areas of music and dance) in the reform as it was finally enacted. The labor-reserves system as such now seems to be a dead letter, though it might be more accurate to say that in effect it has been extended to embrace all schools and all young people.

Regulation of *Vuz* Admissions

At the same time, changes have been effected to improve the chances of workers' and peasants' children competing for entrance to higher educational institutions. Khrushchev and others had repeatedly deplored the handicaps faced by children of lower-status families, scoring in particular the fact that the "competition of parents" with influence was as important in determining *vuz* admissions as was the competition in entrance examinations.[26] In Moscow's higher schools, said Khrushchev, children of workers and collective farmers made up only 30 to 40 percent of the enrollment. The abolition of tuition fees in the *vuzes,* along with those in the secondary schools, was one move calculated to alter this situation. It is particularly revealing that this step was taken at a time when pressure for admission to higher education from the growing ranks of ten-year graduates was reaching its peak—that is, when selectivity in admissions was becoming most necessary. If there were truth in the hypothesis of growing class stratification under pressure from a powerful "state bourgeoisie," just the opposite might have been expected—*i.e.,* a rise in the tuition fees as a convenient way of shutting out low-income applicants.

Very different rules of competition were instead set up. A rising proportion (currently, 80 percent) of *vuz* admissions was reserved for applicants with at least two years of work experience or military service;[27] presumably, this will become a universal requirement when the secondary-school reform is complete. Meanwhile, honor graduates of the ten-year schools and the *tekhnikums* are now obliged to compete in entrance examinations along with everybody else—and, for the sake of "objectivity," the written part of the examinations is turned in under a pseudonym.[28] In most fields, the first two or three years of higher education are to be combined with full-time work, in order both to weed out the less serious students and to impress the future *vuz* graduates with the "glorious traditions of our working class and collective-farm peasantry"—*i.e.,* to blunt the forces making for social separateness.[29] The method of awarding scholarships has been revised to take more account of the material needs of the student, and somewhat less of his grades; special courses are being organized to help *vuz* applicants who have not completed secondary education, or who have been out of school for a while; and all applicants must present recommendations from places of work and also from party, Komsomol, or trade-union organizations, whose representatives in addition sit on admissions boards [30]—all of which recall the days when the official aim was to "proletarianize" the higher schools. Given the recent Soviet willingness to publish more figures (so long as they "look good"), it may be predicted that we shall soon have, for the first time since 1938,

[23] Memorandum to the Central Committee, *Pravda,* Sept. 21, 1958.

[24] Khrushchev estimated an annual increment of 2 to 3.5 million youths in the labor force two years earlier than under the old program (*ibid.*); this gain is exclusive of the part-time work to be performed by pupils in most grades.

[25] It should be pointed out that the eight-year school is not a condensation of the ten-year curriculum but an expansion of the seven-year school—again indicative of the relaxation of academic rigor.

[26] See especially Khrushchev's speech to the 13th Congress of the Komsomol, *Pravda,* April 19, 1958, and his memorandum to the Central Committee, *ibid.* Sept. 21, 1958.

[27] *Ibid.,* June 4, 1958.

[28] *Ibid.,* June 4 and Nov. 12, 1958; *Izvestia,* April 4, 1959. Since honor graduates formerly were admitted without entrance examinations, high-status parents (according to Khrushchev) often put pressure on secondary-school teachers to give their children good grades (*Pravda,* Sept. 21, 1958).

[29] See Khrushchev's memorandum, *Pravda,* Sept. 21, 1958, and the Central Committee resolution on school reform, *ibid.,* Nov. 14, 1958; also Minister of Higher Education Yelyutin's discussions of the problem, *ibid.,* Sept. 17, 1958, and *Izvestia,* Dec. 24, 1958.

[30] See *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* Aug. 16, 1956; *Vestnik Vysshei Shkoly,* No. 9 (Sept.), 1957, pp. 3-5; *Pravda,* June 4, 1958; and *Izvestia,* Dec. 24, 1958, and April 4, 1959.

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comprehensive data on the social origins of students in higher education.[31]

The subject of educational reform cannot be passed over without taking notice of the boarding schools. When Khrushchev first broached the topic at the 20th Congress, observers assumed (as in the case of the secret speech) that his proposal demonstrated the influence of the elite and that the new schools—despite his protestation to the contrary—would be exclusive institutions for the privileged.

The reality of the boarding school has been a far cry from these suppositions. Priority in admission has gone —as, after all, Khrushchev said it should—to children from large or low-income families, and to others from disadvantaged environments. Fees are charged, but they have been waived for those who could not afford them—again in accord with Khrushchev's original suggestion. Moreover, the curriculum has been strictly polytechnical, providing training for such occupations as lathe operators, electricians, farm machine operators, stenographers, typists, *etc.*—hardly pursuits becoming to an aristocratic caste.[32]

Is the Classless Society Coming?

The scope and force of the trend away from extreme differentiation are unmistakable. There are many clues other than those which have already been cited: criticism of the practice of assigning chauffeured cars to officials; a pervasive, if still partial, change in the method of awarding medals and orders; a demand that the Soviet fashion journal concern itself less with evening gowns and furs and more with "everyday" clothes. To dismiss all this evidence as mere window-dressing, as ritual obeisance to an ideology, explains nothing: for why is it happening *now?* Why should Khrushchev feel compelled to renew rituals that Stalin had long neglected, rituals that offend the sensibilities of the "elite"? What, then, does account for the change? Is one facet of the "transition to communism" to be the end of class distinctions?

Stalin, it seems clear, had felt that a high degree of differentiation was necessary to achieve his overriding goal—a very rapid process of industrialization subject to his absolute control. This meant, in the first place, that a group of loyal and competent administrators and other brain-workers had to be created, and quickly. It also meant that large segments of the population would have to be deprived, at least "temporarily," of material returns from their labor, in order that greater proportions of production could be applied to the expansion of industrial capacity. The consequently depressed condition of the workers and peasants Stalin sought to turn to good purpose, by offering them great rewards for joining the administrative and technical corps—hence the wealth, privilege, and prestige which came to define the upper end of the occupational hierarchy. The need for upward mobility to escape a life of privation would induce people to strive for educational training and vocational achievement, and would encourage obedience to Stalin's dictates, while the chance for upward mobility would serve as a substitute for the more prosaic benefits of a slow and moderate rise in the general standard of living.

The gap thus generated between the higher statuses and the lower ably served Stalin's purposes in some respects. Those in high position came to live a different kind of life, free from the material anxieties of those over whom they stood. They became, in short, "insulated" from the less fortunate: blind or indifferent to the needs and wishes of the masses. For they learned that success was to be had by winning the favor not of those below them but of those above them, which was exactly what Stalin wanted them to learn. Now that the policy has come under fire, the attitude which it engendered has been amply described in the Soviet press, for example in this criticism of the "self-willed" official as a type:

Tell such an official that he has disturbed his subordinate's state of mind, and he will probably be amazed: "His state of mind? Brother, we're having trouble meeting our plan here, and I have no time to look into all sorts of cases of melancholia."[33]

The Problems of Stalinist Policy

Nevertheless, extreme social differentiation had its less desirable aspects, too. For one thing, it "overmotivated" the population: anything less than a higher

[31] Another prediction which might be ventured is the resurrection of intelligence and aptitude tests, abolished in the 1930's on the grounds that they emphasized inherited rather than acquired traits and discriminated against children of workers and peasants. In effect, the criteria of "ability" became instead school examinations, grades and *vuz* entrance examinations, which actually discriminate more heavily against low-status students in terms of the motivational or "cultural" influences in their lives. Intelligence-test scores are now considered less immutable than was once thought to be the case, and Khrushchev may "discover" that IQ tests are a more "objective" (*i.e.*, less class-biased) measure of ability than achievement tests.

[32] On the schools, see *Pravda,* Feb. 15 and July 1, 1956; *Uchitelskaia Gazeta,* June 27, 1956; *Trud,* July 27, 1956; *Pravda,* Oct. 9, 1958. It might be noted that many, if not most, of the boarding schools have been converted from former seven- or ten-year schools, probably due to insufficient construction funds.

[33] *Izvestia,* Jan. 18, 1958.

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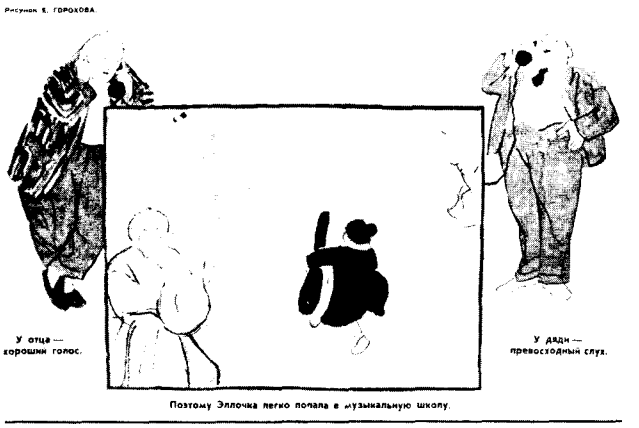
education, and the higher occupation it brought, was regarded as a disgrace for an upper-status child and as a sad fate for a lower-status child—hence, the intense pressure exerted on the educational institutions, the reluctance of youths to commit themselves to factory jobs. For another and more important thing, it interfered with the operation of the impersonal selection system necessary to an efficient economy and to the reward-function of upward mobility. Those in higher and better-paid positions were able to use their influence and their money to assure similar places for their children, at the expense of potentially more capable or more loyal children from less-favored families. Perhaps even worse, some children from well-to-do families neither studied nor worked, but lived off their parents' income—an idle existence which not only meant a loss to the labor force but also, if the Soviet press is to be believed, led in many cases to alcoholism, crime, or even to the acceptance of "bourgeois ideology."[34]

This excessive measure of status security perverted adults as well as children. Once a man was granted local power, he was able to suppress or punish, if not ignore, criticism from his inferiors, and he cooperated with his colleagues to evade the regime's cross-checks on him. This had been intermittently acknowledged in the Soviet Union under the label of *semeistvennost* ("family-ness"), but the full dimensions of the problem are only now being revealed. Among many instances, one may be cited concerning the chairman of a city soviet executive committee who "forbade his assistants and the heads of the city executive committee departments to appeal to party organs without his consent." [35] Thus, higher authorities were precluded from receiving the information they needed to keep tabs on their own subordinates. Or, if the party did manage to find out about and remove some incompetent or dishonest official, he often reappeared in another responsible position—partly, at least, as the result of friendships formed and mutual obligations exacted. Indeed, an integral part of the pattern has been the concern of officials to find places in the *apparat* for friends and relatives who could reciprocally provide a haven if necessary.

All of this was simply the obverse side of the arbitrary power delegated to local officials, for the sake of allowing them to carry out their instructions from above without interference from below. But it was ironically self-defeating: by being freed of criticism from below, administrators were able to free themselves of supervision

[34] Mark G. Field, "Drink and Deliquency in the USSR," *Problems of Communism*, No. 3 (May-June), 1955; Allen Kassof, "Youth vs. the Regime: Conflict in Values," *ibid.*, No. 3 (May-June), 1957.

[35] *Izvestia*, Jan. 16, 1958.



Left: The father has a good voice.
Right: The uncle has perfect hearing.
Below: And thus Elochka easily got into music school.

—*From* **Krokodil** *(Moscow),* **Dec. 20, 1958.**

from above. This threatened to contravene the cardinal dogma of the Soviet system, which has come to be known as Stalinism though it could as well be called Leninism or Khrushchevism: that ultimate power belongs exclusively to the party—or more accurately, to the head of the party. Whenever any group jeopardizes that principle, it must be struck down, and that is what Khrushchev is doing. Stalin, in other words, forgot his Stalinism; and Khrushchev is not repudiating Stalinism, he is, if anything, reinstating it.

Khrushchev's Two-sided Task

No doubt, the Soviet press, in characteristic fashion, has exaggerated the threat. Stalin was not a complete fool, and when all is said and done, he does seem to have kept things pretty well under control. If the group whose growth he fostered was an "elite," then surely no elite has ever proved so utterly helpless in preventing actions which, like those at present, so adversely affect it. The danger was a distant cloud—but a good Bolshevik tries not to wait until the storm has swept away his fortifications. Khrushchev's task, then, is to rid the "state bourgeoisie" of its cockiness, to disabuse it of the notion that it is safe whatever it does, to infuse into it fresh blood, personnel more responsive to orders. Just because of the kinds of positions these people occupy, the task will not be easy, and the plan may be "underfulfilled." But given the Soviet political structure, the odds are on Krushchev's side.

The nature of the targets at which Khrushchev has taken aim makes his crusade sound like an echo of earlier revolutionary periods; but in actuality, the development

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does not connote a return to the situation that prevailed in the early 1920's, for Khrushchev has learned something from Soviet history. The extremes of high and low incomes are to be moderated—but "equality-mongering" is still wrong. Mass participation and criticism from below are to be permitted—but not "violations of state discipline" or "slander of the party and its leaders." Executives should be more humble, more attentive to their subordinates—but the principle of "one-man management" is to be preserved. "The struggle against the cult of the individual does not at all mean a belittling of the significance of leadership and leaders. . . . The party does not advocate the denial of authorities." [36] Moreover, Khrushchev has expressly defended the nonmanual pursuits—"those who work in offices are not at all bureaucrats, they are the creative people who originate that which is new . . ."—and he has strongly implied that, even under communism, there will still be the bosses and the bossed: communist society will be "highly organized." [37] Complete equality is not just around the corner, nor even being contemplated.

"Classlessness" Defined

Nevertheless, Khrushchev *is* seeking a classless society, in the proper sense of the term. If an "upper class," for example, means anything, it means a group of people who share fairly distinctive values and advantages which they are able to hold on to for some length of time, even against the resistance of others. Yet in the totalitarian scheme of things, it is essential to the preservation of party supremacy that no group become so entrenched in positions of strength as to become insulated against further demands from the party. An "upper class," or any other "class," is no more admissible than an autonomous trade union or ethnic group. Hence the party must insist —in the long run—that every man be individually and continuously on trial, that status and rewards remain contingent and ephemeral. The greatest threat to the party is the development of a sense of identification or solidarity within a group—or class—and this is precisely what was happening to the Soviet elite. Khrushchev's war against the bourgeoisie is, in fact, only an extension of the battle with the bureaucrats which has long been a part of Soviet policy, even if it was sometimes muted. In short, "classlessness" is essentially a corollary of Stalinism.

Khrushchev, however, believes himself to be in a better position to attain it than Stalin ever was. The creation of a substantial industrial base has relieved him of the urgency which Stalin so acutely felt. Automation, as he has frequently pointed out, really has diminished the differences between mental workers and manual. The spread of education has freed him from dependence on a relatively small group as the only source of administrative and intellectual personnel; workers and peasants can now be brought into the *vuzes* with less risk of lowering the quality of education (as happened in the 1920's). Finally, he evidently presumes that a long period of enforced political homogeneity has led to the withering away of deviant values among Soviet citizens. Criticism from below would thus be less dangerous, since it is more likely to accord with what the party wants. The only agency left which has enabled Soviet man to maintain and transmit both "hostile" values and favored positions, with even a small degree of success, is the family——whence the significance of the boarding schools (and other attempts to loosen family bonds). For the boarding schools are destined to be not elite institutions, but universal ones: the instrument by which the regime hopes finally to achieve control over the last remaining semi-autonomous activity, the rearing of children.[38] This, too, is an objective which will be familiar to students of Soviet history, but unlike the situation earlier, Soviet leaders may well feel that they now have, or can produce, the material facilities with which to realize it.

Yet it is unlikely that the regime has solved, once and for all, the problem of inequality. Power corrupts—even delegated power. Workers and peasants, no less than intelligentsia, will sooner or later try to put their privileges to uses which, so far as the party is concerned, are "selfish." They may, for example, try to develop a monopoly of their own on higher education, or act "prematurely" to increase the production of consumers' goods or raise wages, in a kind of latter-day "workers' opposition." Or, once terror is removed, they may turn out not to have lost all their hostile values, after all. When that happens, they will once more be put back in the inferior position they knew up to Stalin's death. No end is in sight to this ancient practice of playing one off against the other, this alternate granting of status privilege within a basically classless framework, as the Soviet system struggles with its perennial and fundamental problem: the need to control the controllers.

[36] *Partiinaia Zhizn,* No. 7 (April), 1956, p. 5.

[37] *Pravda,* July 2, 1959; also Khrushchev's report to the 21st Congress, *Pravda,* Jan. 28, 1959.

[38] "The sooner we provide nurseries, kindergartens and boarding schools for all children, the sooner and the more successfully will the task of the communist upbringing of the growing generation be accomplished": Khrushchev's theses on the Seven-Year Plan, *Pravda,* Nov. 14, 1958. See also the decree on the boarding schools in *Pravda,* May 26, 1959.

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". . . But Some Are More Equal Than Others"

By Seweryn Bialer

IT WILL STILL take us a long time, but whatever the circumstances, we must see to it that our specialists—who constitute and will continue to constitute a distinct social stratum until we attain the highest degree of development of Communist society—live better under socialism than under capitalism.[1]

In these words of Lenin we find the origin of the privileged caste of technical intelligentsia and executive officialdom which has long been a distinctive feature of Soviet society. Stalin extended Lenin's principle of privilege to political and administrative "specialists" as well as to experts in the art of coercion; at the same time he created a system of social stratification which, in the degree of its rigidity and class differentiation, has had no equal in contemporary industrial societies.

Among the evolutionary shifts which have taken place since Stalin's death, changes affecting this aspect of Soviet society have attracted special attention—not wholly by chance or without reason. On the one hand, the new leadership has spared no effort to publicize the favorable features of such changes both at home and abroad; along with sputniks, they have increasingly become the trump cards of official propaganda. On the other hand, the policy moves and measures involved here have been a natural focus of outside interest since they have important effects both on the Soviet economy and on the relations of the party to the rest of the society. There is a tendency in the non-Communist world —more conscious in some quarters, of course, than in others—to search for signs of a democratic evolution in the Soviet system, as the most comfortable and simplest escape from the problems and dangers of perpetuated East-West competition. The policy shifts under discussion offer rich food for such hopes because they constitute, without question, significant departures from the past; it therefore becomes a crucial matter to assess them in broad perspective, to see—in short—whether they have affected the essential totalitarian features of the Soviet system.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Russian ed.), 1952, Vol. 33, p. 169.

As a former member of the Polish Communist Party apparatus, Mr. Bialer, who defected in 1956 and now makes his residence in the United States, is thoroughly familiar with the structures and operations not only of his "native" party, but also of the parties of the Soviet Union and the East European countries, which he frequently visited in the years 1949-1955. His analysis of "The 21st Congress and Soviet Policy" appeared in the March-April 1959 issue of this journal.

Types of Change

These shifts can be divided into two groups. In the first group are those which have brought about a distinct improvement in the general living standard and working conditions of the Soviet population. Borrowing from the Marxist-Leninist lexicon, one could justifiably say that the "law of absolute pauperization"—the concept of the inevitable growing poverty of the laboring masses under capitalism—well describes the conditions which prevailed for the great majority of the Soviet populace during Stalin's rule; if there were occasional intervals which saw some amelioration of these conditions, still the overall living standard hovered continuously on the verge of destitution by any yardstick. By contrast, there is not the slightest doubt that a constant rise in living standards has taken place during the last seven years among a broad segment of the population. A great deal of evidence has been compiled to substantiate this trend (see, *e.g.*, the comprehensive article by Alec Nove in the last issue of this journal[2]); and while there are still discrepancies between Soviet propaganda claims and actual achievements, it seems pointless to waste debate on them, since—assuming a continuation of present policies—the gap will narrow with time.

[2] A. Nove, "Social Welfare in the USSR," No. 1 (Jan.-Feb.), 1960, p. 1.

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In the second group are shifts which actually or seemingly affect the class structure of the Soviet Union—that is, the relative status of the different social strata. Again applying Marxist-Leninist concepts, if under Stalinism the "law of absolute pauperization" of the worker and peasant masses occasionally "let up" a little, the "law of [their] relative pauperization" operated without interruption from the late 1920's until very recently. In plainer terms, paralleling the retreat from early "revolutionary romanticism" and the growth of the bureaucracy, there was increasing isolation of the various social strata and increasing disparity between the living conditions and social privileges of the higher and lower classes (or as Flora Lewis has aptly described them, the "upper classless" and the "lower classless"). As will be shown, the changes that would bring about a genuine reversal of this trend are of quite a different caliber than those in the first group.

The issue has been raised whether Stalin—had he lived and faced the same opportunities as Khrushchev—would have acted to raise the living standard of the Soviet people. In this writer's view, there are no grounds for maintaining that Stalin opposed a rise in the living standard *per se:* to suppose that he kept it in a depressed state as an absolute goal rather than as a relative necessity (from his viewpoint) is to demonize his medieval personality and to regard his policy as completely detached from the economic and political facts of life as he saw them. A policy of raising the living standard could be characterized as "anti-Stalinist" if the price of its pursuit were a renunciation of the priority of heavy industry, a slowing down of Soviet military growth, and a decrease in the accumulation-consumption ratio of the economy. Such a policy was pursued by Imre Nagy in Hungary during 1953-54, to a certain extent by Malenkov in the USSR during the same period, and by Gomulka in Poland after 1956.[3]

Khrushchev's program to raise the living standard is no such "anti-Stalinist" policy. It does not reject the basic system of priorities of the Stalinist era. In point of fact, the terms "anti-" or "pro-Stalinist," or "anti-" or "pro-totalitarian," have no more relevancy to his efforts in this area than they have to Soviet successes in the exploration of space. In raising the living standard, Khrushchev has simply actualized *existing potentials* in the economic situation; he has not initiated social changes or ideological revisions.

[3] The Polish example raises the question whether such an "anti-Stalinist" policy can in fact be successfully pursued in a Communist state: while Nagy's and Malenkov's aborted policies are inconclusive in this respect, Gomulka's longer experiment led to deepening economic crisis and ultimately to major revisions in his policy.

The situation is different when it comes to changes in the second category. A lessening of class differentiation in Soviet society—if it should prove to be a genuine trend and not a short-term tactical maneuver—would constitute a basic social reform and a political phenomenon of import. The question is whether the present regime has in fact adopted such a policy—and if so, whether it constitutes a long-range trend comparable to the effort to raise the living standard. There is no doubt that a number of developments attest to some levelling off of class differentiation, but in the author's view this tendency is limited in important respects. The economic effects are the most easily measured, and it is to these that we will first turn attention.

The Status of Peasants *vis-à-vis* Workers

Regarding the industrial workers as the basic layer of Soviet society, the economic stratification initiated under Stalin took place in two directions, both downward and upward.

The peasant became the main victim of the differentiation downward. It is something of a paradox that for long years the only "economic" privilege extended to the peasant—that is, the only hope he had of raising his standard of living—was the right left to him to escape from the countryside to the city. Some statistics just recently revealed give an inkling of the desperate situation which prevailed among the peasantry at the end of the Stalin era: during 1953, 13 percent of the *kolkhozes* in Tadzhikistan were unable to pay their farmers any cash for collective labor, while 28 percent paid only one ruble per labor day[4]—this in a republic which was strongly favored by the existing agricultural price-structure (in 1950, it might be noted, Tadzhikistan and two other cotton-growing republics received 30 percent of all *kolkhoz* money income in the USSR, though containing only 4 percent of the collective farms[5]).

The disproportion between peasant and worker incomes, in Soviet writings euphemistically called "the differences between town and country," has decreased dramatically in the later years of the post-Stalin era. Between 1952-58 all told, the average payment per labor day on the collectives has about tripled, and the total sum of the collectives' payment for labor has almost quadrupled.[6] Nothing close to such an increase

[4] These figures were cited at the December Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee: *Pravda,* Dec. 24, 1959.

[5] See *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies,* report of the Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress, Washington, D.C., 1960, Part I, p. 272.

[6] *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 12, 1958, p. 25.

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has affected industrial wages or the urban standard of living.

The present regime's policy on peasant income may be explained, in the main, as follows: In the era of "primary socialist accumulation"—and then during the postwar reconstruction and development of industry—agriculture was designated as the basic source of accumulation, the payer of what Stalin called the "tribute" necessary to achieve industrialization. But as Soviet industrial power grew, a more equitable distribution of the burden of accumulation between the city and the country, between industry and agriculture, became not only possible, but absolutely necessary if further progress was to be achieved. Lags in agricultural production had become a stumbling block, hindering the expansion of industry, the raising of urban living standards, and not least of all the Kremlin's expansionist plans. Forcible methods of collectivization had been sufficient to ensure the siphoning off of produce from the country to the town, but not to stimulate agricultural development. The introduction of genuine incentives into agriculture—that is, incentives which would raise the standard of living—became imperative.

A New Retreat?

The Soviet leaders have vigorously pursued this objective over a period of years. Recent evidence suggests, however, that they are now more concerned with the reverse of the problem: namely, how to slow down the pace of the process that they set in motion—in fact, how to prevent the peasants' income from reaching the level of the workers' income. Clear indications of this concern were manifested at the December plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, where a concerted attack was launched against the present index of purchasing prices for agricultural commodities. One after another, high functionaries of the party took the stand against the current price scale. The first Secretary of the Tadzhik SSR, T. Uldzhabayev, declared that at meetings of activists and on higher party levels, "a unanimous opinion concerning the need to lower prices for cotton, fruit and other products had been expressed [applause]."[7] Georgia's First Secretary, V. Mzhavanadze, asserted that it was "necessary to work out new proposals for lowering the purchase prices of tea, citrus fruits, bay leaves, and industrial crops."[8] The speeches of C. Polyansky of the RSFSR, N. Podgorny of the Ukraine, V. Akhundov of Azerbaijan and many others were keyed to the same theme.

Two future courses were suggested at the plenum. On the one hand, it was proposed that *kolkhoz* commodity prices be adjusted, on a step-by-step basis, to approximate more closely the prices "paid" to *sovkhozi* (the state farms). "It is necessary," said Mr. Polyansky (RSFSR), "to work toward a closer approach between *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz* costs of production . . ." and "toward a closer approach between *kolkhoz* purchase prices and the contractural prices of the *sovkhozi*."[9] An indication of the differences between *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz* delivery prices was provided by N. Belyaev, in data on Kazakhstan for 1958:[10]

	Kolkhoz Price	*Sovkhoz Price*
	(in rubles per centner)	
Wool	4,213.00	1,821.00
Mutton	578.92	320.92
Beef	773.50	416.72
Sunflower Seed	138.72	60.30

If these figures are representative of the whole country, it would seem necessary to lower *kolkhoz* prices by some 40 to 60 percent to meet *sovkhoz* levels.

The second proposal advanced at the plenum—by N. Podgorny, N. Belyaev, and others—was to introduce a maximum wage for the collective farmers.[11] While no exact figure was set, there have been various indications that the *maximum* collective wage under consideration would approximate the *average* industrial wage. It is worth noting that the proposal was put forward following complaints by several speakers that *kolkhozniki* in some regions were earning more than the average wage of workers in the area. That such cases must be few and far between, however, seems indicated by data revealing that during 1958, the average monthly earning of *kolkhozniki*—combining payments in money and in kind—was below the minimum wage of 270 rubles established for rural areas.[12] It seems clear from these figures that no more than a small percentage of *kolkhoz* workers could, in the near future, reach the proposed maximum wage whether it is adopted or not.

The complaints and proposals aired at the December plenum bring into focus the problem confronting the leadership. The current price level for the purchase of collective commodities has been one of the mainsprings responsible for the improvement of agricultural pro-

[7] *Pravda,* Dec. 24, 1959.

[8] *Ibid.,* Dec. 25, 1959.

[9] *Ibid.,* Dec. 23, 1959.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Based on the author's extrapolation of data in *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies,* p. 274-76.

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duction. Its importance is underscored by the fact that in 1958, for the first time in the history of collectivization, cash payments for collective labor overtook the gross income earned by the *kolkhozniki* from the sale of produce raised on their private plots.[13] Any downgrading of the price index is bound to lead to a drop in peasant incomes—or at very least to hold them in check—and the adverse psychological effects of such a move could be serious in the extreme.

The dilemma which confronts the regime is how to continue encouraging the development of agriculture—necessary if it is to fulfill its projected goal of overtaking the United States in *per capita* agricultural production—while at the same time guarding against the increase of peasant income at a greater pace than that of the rest of society, specifically the workers. The leadership wants only to narrow, not to close, the gap between the peasants' and the workers' living standard—at least until such time as it feels able to transform the collectives into a completely state-owned system of agriculture. In view of the complexities of this situation, it is pointless for the moment to speak of a dominant trend toward the levelling of the economic inequities which have separated these two groups.

Shifts in "Upward" Differentiation

Whether the process of stratification that took place upward from the working class, separating it from the "higher" layers of the society, has now been set in reverse is a much more complicated question. There is a great deal of statistical evidence available concerning the improved circumstances of the workers. But there is very little hard data to show the effects of recent policies on the upper strata; and the higher a particular group stands in the hierarchy, the less is said about it in official sources. Moreover, the higher the group, the more its status must be measured in terms not just of money income but of a broad range of privileges—both economic and non-economic—which indirectly favor its welfare.

Starting, then, with the clearest evidences of change, there is no doubt that steps have been taken to lessen the fantastic ranges in earning power, and hence in living conditions, within the industrial working class. There is also not much doubt that the chasm between the workers on the one hand and the lower-level "organizational" men and technical intelligentsia on the other has been closed to some extent. The differences of economic position both within and between these groups are indicated fairly accurately by the simple dimension of nominal earnings. The basic intent of the regime in this respect is clear from the wage and salary provisions of the Seven-Year Plan: the minimum wage is to increase by some 60 to 70 percent between 1959 and 1965, compared to an average increase in all money wages of 26 percent.[14] Since by some estimates 20 percent or more of all workers in the main sectors of the state economy are in the minimum wage bracket, it seems safe to assume that the most glaring wage disparities—in the broad range from unskilled workers at one end to technical specialists and middle-ranking professionals or officials at the other—will be lessened considerably.[15]

Moving on up the scale, we come to the question of economic differentiation between the above-mentioned groups and the party and governmental managerial strata. It is at this level that information concerning direct monetary remuneration is most difficult to come by There have been rumors that the salaries of some very high-ranking bureaucrats—for example, government ministers—have recently been reduced.[16] But how wide or how deep the scythe has cut nobody knows; there are not even solid grounds for speculation.

This, however, is the least of the problem. For at the higher levels, excessive inequalities in nominal wages cease to be the only yardstick for measuring differences in economic status. From the medium strata of officialdom on upward, economic privileges of a non-monetary character increasingly affect and determine the living standard of their recipients. These privileges are hard to measure not only because they are rarely discussed in detail in Soviet publications, but also because they are largely qualitative rather than quantitative in nature.

Economic Immeasurables

Some examples will be useful. In the catastrophic housing situation which exists in the Soviet Union today, the allotment of dwelling space depends much less on a person's ability to pay than on his official status. His position in the power set-up determines the

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 275.

[14] *Pravda,* Nov. 14, 1958.

[15] The 20-percent figure has been estimated to apply in the broad sectors of industry, transport, communication and construction: *Sotsialisticheski Vestnik* (New York), December 1959, p. 233.

[16] *E.g.,* the Moscow correspondent of the French newspaper *Le Monde,* Michel Tatu, reports (Jan. 5, 1960) getting "indications" from M. Volkov, Chairman of the Soviet Governmental Commission for labor and wages, that many top ministerial, military and administrative officials had been cut in salary.

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size and the quality of the housing he can procure. In urban areas a great portion of the party apparatus, for example, lives in specially-built blocks of apartments—well above average in their appointments—which are the property of the party and are excluded from the supervision of the local authorities. Since, moreover, these units cannot accommodate all party personnel, a certain number of units in newly-built apartment houses are systematically assigned to the party from the general housing pool administered by the local government. Once these units are assigned, control passes entirely to the party, which can choose or change tenants at will. Cases have even been reported where unoccupied apartments have been held in reserve by local party committees. In this situation, housing has inevitably become a political instrument with which to reward the worthy or to punish the recalcitrant.

Other non-monetary economic privileges can again be exemplified by party practice, though also available through separate channels to all groups of the elite. First of all, the party owns and operates a whole chain of so-called "rest homes"—in effect, vacation resorts—offering free and relatively high-class accommodations to all party personnel and their families.[17] In addition, party workers have access to a party-run network of medical facilities, complete with highly-trained personnel, modern methods of treatment, and scarce domestic or imported medicines not generally available to the public. A ruble in the hands of a party *apparatchik* has a "usable value" no less important than its nominal purchasing power: It may be spent at any of a number of stores, service shops, cafeterias and canteens which are run by the party outside the public retail trade network, and which offer a line of "deficit" or luxury goods and services rarely obtainable elsewhere. Among other economic sidelines, the party even maintains a so-called "loan-assistance fund" from which party workers can borrow money without interest, paying it back in small installments. These are only a few of the operations through which the party disperses its favors.

[17] "Rest homes" are, of course, supposed to be available to all deserving Soviet workers, but some simple arithmetic raises questions about this claim. According to an official Soviet source, as of 1958 there were 836 "rest homes" in the USSR, accommodating 160,000 people for two-week vacation periods. According to the same source, the total working force in the nationalized economy and state administration in the same year totaled 54.4 million people. Extrapolating these figures, it is seen that the rest homes can accommodate only about 7 to 8 percent of the working population. The opportunities for "privilege-mongering" become clear. Source: *Narodnoe Khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 godu,* Moscow, 1959, pp. 101, 666, 895.

The privileges spoken of here do not just pertain to the few hundred officials in Khrushchev's inner circle (they are already living in a "Communist" society where everybody receives according to his needs). These privileges are enjoyed—to a greater or lesser degree, of course—by the entire political bureaucracy and a considerable part of the state bureaucracy. When the sum of such peripheral benefits is considered, it is clear that economic differentiation between the political or administrative official and the average citizen is much more than a matter of difference in pay.

Are these privileges now being eliminated—or even modified? It is impossible to answer definitively. More than likely they have simply assumed a more "sophisticated"—that is, less obvious—character as a result of the general improvement on the "open" market and the decrease in consumer-goods shortages. The Soviet system at present and for the foreseeable future will remain a system where the conveyance of goods from the producer to the consumer is primarily determined not by simple laws of supply and demand—*i.e.,* by a free circulation of commodities in exchange for money—but by planned distribution, allowing regime authorities to decide to a large degree what will be sold, where, when, and to whom. The wealth of published testimony bearing witness to the differences in the quantity and quality of goods available in Moscow compared to the provincial cities, or again in industrial towns compared to rural areas, indicates the broad pattern established by distribution controls up to the present. Within this framework, it is clear that planning decisions have been based on both economic and political priorities—and the shorter the supply of particular goods, the greater the influence of political considerations in their distribution.

In the absence of any indications to the contrary, it is fair to assume that these priorities continue to operate.[18] The indirect economic privileges described above may be "survivals from the past" but they have an incentive value among the upper strata which the regime would be loathe to sacrifice. It would be neither possible, given the inadequate level of consumer goods and services, nor politic, given the professed policy of wage equalization, for the regime to compensate for any abandonment of these privileges with some form

[18] The parallel situation in Poland is interesting in this respect. During the Polish "October" a great number of the non-monetary economic privileges of the ruling bureaucracy were abruptly liquidated. Yet in the period of "stabilization" since, Gomulka has found it necessary to restore the system of privilege to some extent—this despite his own notably ascetic tastes (which would seem to militate against such a retreat) and despite the inevitable negative impact on public opinion.

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A POLISH COMMENT

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KAŻDEMU WEDŁUG POTRZEB?

To Each According to His Needs?

—From Szpilki, Sept. 13, 1959.

of direct monetary return. Taking all of the above into consideration, any talk of a trend aimed at undercutting the privileged economic position of Soviet officialdom is—to say the least—premature.

The War on Permanent Privilege

There is, however, a category of policies adopted by the Soviet leadership which in a special and distinct sense has been directed against these upper strata; such policies have had as their common target the perpetuation of privileged status without regard to performance, the "bequest" of such status from one generation to another, and the companion tendency in Soviet society toward class immobility.

Thus, in the case of Khrushchev's educational reforms, for example, steps have been taken to equalize the opportunities and competition for higher education among youths from all social classes of the population, and to curb the abuses of social privilege and power whereby upper class families have often secured the enrollment of their children in the universities. These measures should help to increase upward mobility and in time to make class standing more dependent on ability, less on heredity.

Another step in the same direction has been the prolonged and vigorous press campaign attacking the laws of inheritance and other privileges of the so-called "golden youth"—the sons of "good" family who for all practical purposes do not work, but instead live off their parents' incomes or inheritances left to them.

The regime's attack is directed not only against the sons but against the fathers—that is, against the assumed privilege of "life membership" in the hierarchy. While this privilege has never, of course, been set forth as a positive right, its foundations were laid during Stalin's time. In the development of the "new class" under Stalin, upward mobility was restricted—though for the ablest the road led to ever higher honors. On the other hand, downward mobility was even more restricted: the road of descent was limited almost exclusively to political "liquidation" and/or the grave. Assuming that a careerist steered clear of political deviations, did not antagonize superiors, and had some talent for flattery, he could attain a permanent berth among the privileged, once he was "in" with those who counted. The hero of a collection of stories recently published in the Soviet Union—a party functionary named Prokhor—exemplifies and perhaps immortalizes the "staying power" of the privileged group. When questioned about his professional speciality, Prokhor characterizes himself as "party activist" or "leader" (*rukovoditel*). He not only fails to discharge duties but positively disrupts operations in one after another of the positions he holds—yet another place is always offered to him. Why?—because in the files of the party committee he is a party activist, a member of the privileged group; he is not guilty of political deviations, and is generally a "nice fellow"; therefore he must be given a responsible post.[19]

[19] N. Troyepolski, *Prokhor Semnadsatii i drugie* (Prokhor the Seventeenth and Others), Moscow, 1955.

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The current leadership is clearly at war against this concept of permanent privilege. One of the weapons it has used has been to cut back the size of the party and state elite.[20] In this process it has relegated officials who have not shown administrative or leadership ability to jobs in direct production.

The Motivations

These several policies certainly do damage to the position of the bureaucratic and managerial strata, and they have not been undertaken merely for the sake of propaganda—though they are widely exploited as such. Do they, on the other hand, constitute an attack on the *existence* of the new class, or on its basic right to a privileged position in Soviet society? It would seem not. Khrushchev's new-found taste for greater equipotentiality among social groups is not an attempt to destroy the "new class," but rather, in a sense, to "rescue" it from itself—and in the process, to make sure that it remains dependent on the party leadership.

If the the slogan "back to Leninism," so frequently employed by Khrushchev, means anything at all, it means his attempt to return to a more offensive, ambitious and imaginative policy in all spheres of Soviet activity. But the shape in which he found the "new class" when he acceded to power was inadequate to the tasks and goals he had in mind; its muscles, so to speak, had lost their flexibility and had grown fat. Inflexibility among cadres is desirable in the sphere of ideological adherence, but not at the level of practical performance. Accordingly, Khrushchev has set about making the "new class" not only more flexible but more dynamic. From his point of view, this class should have a right to enjoy special economic privileges, but not as an end in themselves. It should be a hard-working elite, not a leisure class. It should have the drive of the "empire-builders" of the nineteenth century, not the comfort-seeking self-complacency of an aristocracy.

At the same time, Khrushchev's reforms have had another—and perhaps even more important—end in view. The "new class" cannot be allowed to grow strong enough to achieve even partial independence from the central authority, the party leadership. If the control of the leaders is to be maintained, there should be no people of "independent means," and no groups with a "guaranteed" permanent place in the bureaucratic hierarchy. When such guarantees exist, or are taken for granted, a caste loses its zest and becomes preoccupied with its own private affairs—and the ties making it dependent on the leadership begin to weaken. Hence all blessings must come from on high; it must remain within the province of the leadership to grant or withhold them, and to demand that they constantly be earned anew.

In Stalin's time any tendency toward the weakening of ties between the upper strata and the regime was kept in check by the constant threat and frequent use of terror, in wholesale violation of so-called "socialist legality." With the abolishment of organized terror the regime has been faced with the task of curbing this tendency by "lawful" measures—*i.e.,* by strong and continuous economic and organizational checks. This factor is important in considering how Khrushchev has been able to carry through his "reforms" without greater and more effective opposition on the part of the upper strata. It should be kept in mind that freedom from fear and terror is a very fresh sensation for these people. Khrushchev has demonstrated on more than one occasion that he can be ruthless in the face of resistance, and the choice between accepting his reforms and inviting even a partial retreat towards coercive methods of "persuasion" had probably not been difficult to make. To use an old adage, the elite probably recognizes that it cannot eat its cake and have it too.

Evolutionary Trends

Adjusting our focus once again to the whole society, it can be shown that a very curious and seemingly contradictory process is taking place in the Soviet Union. On the one hand, the structure and functions of the primary productive and administrative units of the economy have been influenced, to an increasing degree, by factors of rationality; both the managers and the workers, at their respective levels of responsibility, have been allowed to exercise far more initiative than was the case under Stalin. On the other hand, the control of the central authority—its ability to render and to enforce basic policies—has not been diminished, but in fact has increased in certain important respects. In short, *the monistic character of the Soviet system of governance*—which is the heart of the meaning of totalitarianism—has become even more pronounced.

This phenomenon merits close examination. In analyses of the recent evolution of Soviet totalitarianism, the main stress has been laid on the absence of one-man dictatorship in the first years after Stalin's death and on

[20] Very little information is available on the size of these cuts, though there is no doubt that some have taken place, particularly in the state bureaucracy. With regard to the party apparatus, a delegation of the Italian Communist Party, in a report on talks with Soviet party officials, quoted a high-level deputy's statement that cuts have been made and are still being made: *Problemi e realita dell'URSS,* Riunitti, Rome, 1958, p. 52.

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the relative weakness of the recent dictatorship of Khrushchev. Totalitarianism is not, of course, identical with one-man dictatorship. There are dictatorships at present in a number of countries (*e.g.,* the UAR, Iraq, Portugal and Spain), but these regimes cannot be labeled totalitarian. But does the opposite hold true? Can a totalitarian system endure for long without some form of dictatorship, of domination by an individual, at the top? The Soviet experience would indicate that it cannot. The inner logic of totalitarianism creates a tendency toward the concentration of power in the hands of a single leader.

What explains this tendency? The *sine qua non* of a totalitarian system is the existence of central authority to make and to enforce basic decisions affecting all spheres of life. When there is a fluctuating balance of power at the center, in turn causing fluctuation or frequent change in basic policies, then the efficiency and discipline of the society are dangerously weakened. Such periods of instability may occur in any totalitarian system, but almost immediately the search for a new condition or form of stability begins.

The process that is set in motion can best be demonstrated by drawing a contrast. In a parliamentary democracy basic policies are determined by the opinion of the majority. In the parliamentary body itself, there must be a so-called "working majority" if the business of state is to be accomplished; in the absence of such a majority over any period of time, policy determinations remain in a state of suspension and the parliamentary system itself is threatened. (The crisis in the Fourth French Republic before de Gaulle's accession is a good example of this situation.)

It has been supposed by some that the top policy-making bodies in the Soviet system—the Presidium and the Central Committee of the party—similarly operated on the basis of a "working majority" during the period of so-called "collective leadership." In point of fact, the concept of "collective leadership," invoked after Stalin's death and finally dropped in the summer of 1957, was adopted precisely because of the lack of such a majority. It is sufficient to recall the countless shifting alliances and conflicts among the Soviet leaders to realize the ridiculousness of supposing that any real "working majority" could have existed (*e.g.,* Khrushchev, Malenkov and others *vs.* Beria in 1953; Khrushchev, Molotov, Bulganin and others *vs.* Malenkov in 1954; Khrushchev, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Shepilov and others *vs.* Molotov in 1955; Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Shepilov, Bulganin *vs.* Khrushchev, Mikoyan and Zhukov in 1956-57; Khrushchev and others *vs.* Zhukov in 1957—enough instances, one would hope, to prove the point). The concept of collective leadership endured as long as there was a relative equilibrium of power within the Soviet leadership, *preventing* the formation of a working majority. The process of elimination necessary before such a "working" majority could be formed left—in the end—a "majority of one."

Khrushchev's rise demonstrates that the present Soviet system is not much different from its predecessor in so far as the inexorable tendency toward a concentration of power is concerned. The power he now commands does not, of course, approach the degree or scope of the power wielded by Stalin in the prime of his dictatorship, and possibly it never will attain that level. In this sense it might be claimed that the Soviet system is "less totalitarian" than in the past. There are, however, other factors to be considered which preclude such a judgment.

Shifts in the Power Pattern

Let us turn, then, to a consideration of the means and channels by which regime policies are put into effect. For it is in this area that the writer finds basis for claiming that the monistic character of Soviet totalitarianism —far from "fading away"—has become intensified.

It falls, of course, to the Soviet bureaucratic hierarchy to communicate the policies and decisions of the leadership down to the operational level, to organize their implementation, and to oversee and ensure their fulfillment. This broad hierarchy can be divided, in terms of function, into four main groups: The political bureaucracy (the party apparatus); the bureaucracy of coercion

It All Depends on Who and When . . .

". . . The leadership of the party and the state should not be concentrated in the hands of one man or a few men; this is not desirable."—*N. S. Khrushchev, as quoted by Imre Nagy in his book,* In Defense of the New Course *(Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1957), p. 250. The statement was made in 1953 and pertained to the conflict between Nagy and Rakosi.*

"A plenary session of the Central Committee of the CPSU . . . a few days ago elected Comrade N. S. Khrushchev First Secretary of the CC."—*Izvestia,* Sept. 13, 1953.

"The USSR Supreme Soviet resolves . . . to appoint Comrade N. S. Khrushchev Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers."—*Izvestia,* March 28, 1958.

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(the police and the legal system); the military bureaucracy (the permanent professional army); and the administrative and managerial bureaucracy (the state apparatus).

It can be shown that the boundaries between these groups, in terms of their functions and power, have never before been so sharply drawn—or differentiated—as they are now. In Stalin's time there was a kind of dualism—or quadruplism, if one will—apparent in the respective jurisdictions and relative power of these groups. It was manifested above all in the peculiar, fluctuating equilibrium of power that existed between the political bureaucracy and the coercive apparatus. Neither of these groups established clear superiority or control over the other;[21] on the other hand, both were more powerful than the remaining two bureaucracies. Yet the latter groups, though in a subordinate position, were able to create their own highly-centralized organizations, with certain internal features that restricted or counteracted outside interference.

In the seven years since Stalin's death, the position of the political apparatus has been enhanced to a point where it is both absolutely and relatively the most powerful element in the bureaucratic hierarchy. This has been accomplished both by curtailing the power of the other groups and by increasing the prerogatives and functions of the party *apparatchiki.*

It would not take much persuasion to convince anyone that the role and the power of the coercive bureaucracy has been radically decreased, eliminating it as a challenge to the party: It is similarly clear that since the purge of Zhukov, the relative power and independence of the military bureaucracy has declined *vis-à-vis* the political apparatus. The area in which the author's assertions may be questioned concerns the present influence of the administrative and managerial bureaucracy as compared to the party. The fact that administrators and managers have been allowed a great deal more initiative in conducting their work has led some to assume that their specific gravity in the Soviet power mechanism has increased as well. A comparison of the changing structure and functions of the state and political bureaucracies shows that this assumption is unwarranted.

Emergence of the "Supreme" Party

In the first place, the party apparatus has remained highly centralized. To the extent that personnel cuts have taken place (see footnote 20), they have mainly affected the lowest levels of the party. By contrast, the state apparatus has been substantially decentralized, especially in the economic field, and many of its central ministries and agencies have been abolished.

With the dissolution of a large part of the central state apparatus, the party bureaucracy has assumed much greater responsibility at higher levels for the functions of communicating regime decisions downward and overseeing their execution. At the same time, its role in the direct organization of production has greatly increased at the intermediate level of operations, as a result of the creation of the *sovnarkhozy* (the regions constituting the basic economic and administrative units in Khrushchev's decentralization scheme). Perhaps most dramatic has been the increase of its power at the *oblast* (district) level, where the long-standing problem of dual authority between the local party and government organs has generally been resolved in favor of the former. The one real blow to local party strength in the rural areas, the liquidation of the machine-tractor stations, is being compensated in part by granting the party organizations in the *kolkhozi* more power to influence production decisions.

In another and quite different area—the conduct of Soviet relations with the international Communist movement and with other regimes in the Soviet empire—the party apparatus has again assumed a much larger role than it played in the past, frequently acting as the direct channel for contacts which in Stalin's time were handled by state officials and diplomatic representatives.

It would seem that the record speaks for itself. The party bureaucracy is at present the only remaining apparatus which is centralized in its organization, which operates at all levels of the society, and which "specializes" in every sphere of societal activity. In its functions of communicating, controlling and to an ever greater degree directly organizing the tasks set forth by the leadership, it influences the operations of the other bureaucratic apparatuses, but is not in turn subject to any outside interference. It is subordinate only to

[21] In the Stalin era, the ubiquitous police apparatus had rights of inspection and control in all spheres of the society. It interfered with the work of the other apparatuses in a number of ways—not only in security matters but in the implementation of the political line, cadre, policy, *etc.* It was only in relation to the party apparatus (and to some extent the military apparatus) that certain limitations were in force.

The party apparatus, for its part, had no reciprocal power to control or inspect the operations of the police apparatus. Only in matters of political indoctrination and propaganda did the party have a right to impose its decisions upon the police. And even this right was more formal than real, since party committees in the police apparatus were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Security itself—unlike their counterparts in, say, the military apparatus, which were responsible in the last instance to the party's Central Committee.

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the top leadership and to its own hierarchical line of authority. The individual member of the apparatus has, of course, a clearly-defined and limited area of operation, but the apparatus as a whole is under no such limitations. In short, it has assumed an exclusive, ubiquitous, and all-pervasive role in the society.

It is *this* narrow group, then—narrow in relation both to the size of the entire party, and to the size of other groups within the Communist bureaucracy—which has come to constitute the new ruling stratum in the Soviet Union.[22] While its ranks include a number of "experts" with specialized functions and authority, the role of the apparatus as a whole is perhaps best expressed in the functions and powers of the hierarchy of party "first" secretaries. The activity of the party secretary is restricted only by the territorial limits of his jurisdiction and by the decisions of the next secretary up the line; he may exercise his authority in any sphere, imposing his will on the economic administration, the educational system, the local governmental apparatus, *etc.* He is, in effect, the one representative of the Communist bureaucracy within "his" area whose scope of professional interests and right of interference are virtually absolute and all-embracing. In this sense he personifies the omnipotence of the party apparatus within the society at large.

It may be argued that the role of the managerial bureaucracy is to an extent parasitical, as compared to its counterpart in a free economic system; yet once the "means of production" are nationalized, once a state economy is established, the managerial apparatus can at least be defended as economically necessary and socially justifiable. This justification is lacking in the case of the political bureaucracy; its *raison d'être* is solely to perpetuate the supremacy of the party.

The Nature of the New "Democracy"

Perhaps no one has better defined the character of "democracy" in the Soviet Union than the American economist David Granick, in his book *The Red Executive*:

The essence of Soviet "democracy" is the activity of large numbers of people in interpreting to their local scene the decisions made higher in the organization, . . . taking part in carrying out these decisions, . . . supervising their execution by others, and finally . . . trying to mobilize support for these decisions among the general Soviet public. In short, *democracy consists of participation in everything except basic decision-making.*[23]

This, in simplest terms, expresses the barrier which continues to divide and distinguish the *rulers* from the *ruled* in Soviet society. The party leadership has been willing—as industrial development made it possible—to share the ruling group's position of *economic* privilege with other strata of the population, to extend the "fruits of the revolution" on an ever greater scale to an ever greater number of people. But more closely and jealously than ever, it guards the ruling group's position of *political* privilege—that is, its monoply of power and final authority over the basic decisions which determine the direction and character of the society. A number of non-party specialists and even some outstanding workers in certain occupations (*e.g.* mining), may enjoy a living standard close to that of the ruling group; in fact, the highest-paid managerial personnel and specialists may be "better off" than the preponderant majority of the political apparatus. But here any equality of status ends. The economic privileges granted at any level represent payment for services rendered on order of the political rulers; and at any level they are incentives aimed at binding the recipients to the party regime. In the last analysis, even the highest-ranking specialists—as long as they are *only* specialists and not members of the political bureaucracy—have

[22] According to the author's calculations (based on various factors which cannot be presented here for lack of space), the party apparatus in the Soviet Union is composed of about 200,000 officials—that is, some 3 percent of the party membership and only a fraction of a percent of the total population.

[23] D. Granick, *The Red Executive,* Doubleday and Co., New York, 1960, p. 196.

The Party Ueber Alles

The highest expression of the leading role of the party here in the Soviet Union . . . is the fact that not a single important political or organizational question is decided by any Soviet or other mass organization without guiding directions from the party. In this sense it could be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat is in essence the "dictatorship" of its vanguard, the "dictatorship" of its party, as the main guiding force of the proletariat.

—J. V. Stalin (1926), in *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1940, p. 135.

The party is responsible for everything. Whether it is Army work, Chekist work, economic work, Soviet work—all is subordinate to the party leadership, and if anyone thinks otherwise, that means he is no Bolshevik.

—N. Khrushchev, *Kolhospnyk Ukrainy* (In Ukrainian), Kiev, May 20, 1940.

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no more right than the lowliest citizens to affect or participate in the basic policy-making function.

The same barrier applies to the so-called "freedom of initiative" in Soviet life. Any "initiative to make decisions" has remained tightly within the grasp of the party apparatus; what has been granted—and in fact widely encouraged in the regime's own interest—is the "initiative to implement decisions." One could not wish a more succinct definition of this difference than that offered in a Soviet pedagogical textbook: "Initiative is an independent search for the best way to fulfill a command."

Progress—Toward What?

The fierce struggle for power within the Kremlin, and the final victorious emergence of Khrushchev, was the inevitable product—the "other side of the coin," so to speak—of the myth of collective leadership. Similarly, the concentration and "universalization" of the power of the political bureaucracy is "the other side of the coin" of Khrushchev's decentralization and democratization reforms. If, as a result of these reforms, the political regime is less preoccupied with petty interference in the lives of its citizens and in the day-to-day determinations necessary in their work, then it is more preoccupied than ever with the basic decisions by which its policies are implemented, with the control of fundamental managerial activities. The lessening of terror—the most fearful and brutal characteristic of Soviet totalitarianism in Stalin's era—and the downgrading of the role of the apparatus which stood behind it, has gone hand in hand with the extension of political control and the elevation of the party apparatus to a unique position of authority. To interpret this process as a diminution of totalitarianism is an utter fallacy.

A Polish writer, back in the days of the October upheaval of 1956, posed the pointed question: "If a cannibal eats with a fork and knife, does it mean progress?" By dictionary definition, progress means "moving forward, developing to a higher stage, gradual betterment." Does the Kremlin's adoption of more civilized means to accomplish its ends mean "gradual betterment"? From the point of view of the average Soviet citizen, it probably does. Perhaps it does from the leadership's point of view, too: the notion of "progress," after all, is highly subjective in character. In addition, any concept of "progress," as applied to a whole society, embraces various fields of human and social activity, some complementary, some bearing no relation to each other.

It is important to keep in mind that "progress"—or, for that matter, "regress"—is not the same as "change." In the Soviet Union changes are taking place in all spheres of the national life; if these constitute progress in some respects, they do not necessarily mean progress in others. There is no doubt that certain changes have initiated a progressive betterment in the living conditions and standards of Soviet society at every level. But changes which would diminish—rather than merely reorganize—the totalitarian features of the Soviet system are yet to come.

While the future is never entirely predictable, it seems improbable that a genuine retreat from totalitarianism will come about through reform from above, so long as those in control—men who took part in building Stalin's empire and who are well-schooled in the ways of the "old master"—remain at the helm of Soviet society. To quote another Polish writer's remark at the time of the revolution: "Woe to us, so long as the principle remains in force that only the people who damaged the machine are entitled to repair it."

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The Soviet Power Elite

The Managers

The Red Executive,
by David Granick.
Doubleday Company, Inc.
New York, 1960.

Reviewed by Margaret Dewar

IN THIS BOOK the author has undertaken to study the Soviet industrial manager as a "species," and to compare him with his American counterpart. These are the main aspects of his inquiry: Who are the managers? What pressures and incentives mold them? What do they accomplish, and by what means? How do they and their environment differ in the two countries? The author's broad conclusions are that the basically similar nature of industrial problems in both countries sets a limit to the differences that undoubtedly exist, and that "certain managerial areas" are approached by Soviet and American managers in much the same way. Such similarities are not surprising, given the rapid industrial growth in both countries and the fact that both nations have frontier aspirations and "worship size, speed, and material success." Mr. Granick considers that the respective factory systems that have evolved are "two different species," but that they are "of the same genus," *i.e.,* that they are both the outcome of the modern industrial revolution.

This approach is an acceptable basis for an analysis of "the managerial game." Matter-of-fact acceptance of the present-day Soviet set-up, without reference to whether or not it fulfills initial social and political aspirations, is in some ways more realistic than an appraisal of the USSR in terms of the "revolution betrayed." But this basis is nevertheless incomplete: Mr. Granick compares the outcome of two different developments without specifically analyzing, or even mentioning, the different premises which clearly must have affected the evolution of industry and of managerial personnel. Industrialization in the United States was a relatively gradual and natural process, proceeding hand in hand with the geographical expansion and political awakening of the country. In Russia, on the contrary, industrialization was a conscious process, "totally" planned. It was linked with profound social changes and was ruthlessly carried out not only against the resistance of a social order that had outlived itself, but against the wishes of the majority of the population.

Moreover, though Russia, like other newly-developing countries, had the advantage of starting technologically where the older industrialized nations had left off, she had, on the other hand, to grapple with lack of investment capital, an untrained labor force, an extreme shortage—if not total absence—of managerial and administrative personnel, a backward agriculture, and overpopulation on the land. This background accounts for the uneven development of the USSR, where noon rockets exist side by side with a desperate scarcity of ordinary kitchen pots and pans, where workers enjoy widespread educational facilities and social services, yet are still denied the elementary rights to elect their own representatives and to strike. This unevenness also makes it difficult to assess precisely what stage the Soviet industrial revolution has reached.

KEEPING all this in mind, one can then proceed to analyze and compare the set-up in the two countries on the basis of present-day performances and appearances. The latter Mr. Granick does in a thoroughly objective and stimulating way, taking in the manager's family background, education, standard of living, scope of work and responsibility, pressures and incentives, methods of factory administration, labor problems, and other related matters. Written in a lively, idiomatic style, his book not only reveals freshness of mind, thorough knowledge, and detachment from "the game of business," but also is commendably devoid of speculative interpretations of the "ideological" motives that "make the Soviet manager tick."

Mrs. Dewar is a British specialist on Soviet labor and industry. Among her published works are Industrial Management in the USSR: An Outline Study *(Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1945), and* Labour Policy in the USSR, 1917-1928 *(Oxford Press, London, 1956).*

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Mr. Granick finds that the Soviet manager today, like the majority of his American colleagues, is the son of a "white-collar" family. As such, his chances of obtaining a higher education were, in 1936, 2.8 times greater, and of achieving top management level 6.4 times greater, than those of a worker's or peasant's son—the latter figure comparing with 8.3 times for the United States as of 1952. All available evidence goes to show that the Soviet proportion has, if anything, changed further in favor of "white-collar" sons. Thus, occupational mobility is, with minor variations, much the same in both countries, and social stability has once more become accepted in the USSR. Yet, in both countries, observes Mr. Granick, the myth of continuing social mobility persists and serves as a "strong force pushing in the direction of equality." The author also states that in Russia this myth is supplemented by the still assiduously cultivated image of the USSR as a workers' state, and he contends that this has put the "white-collar" sons at a psychological disadvantage and has bred toughmindedness among the managers. This interpretation seems questionable. Khrushchev's repeated statements emphasizing the importance and honorable status of manual labor (to which the author himself calls attention) seem to provide a clear indication that the new generation of "top people" no longer feels the need to work its way up from the proletarian level. But the myth has to be maintained—primarily for the benefit of the proletariat itself.

The real explanation for the managers' toughmindedness seems to lie rather in their conditions of work and promotion prospects. College training (chiefly in engineering and closely connected with industry) is today virtually a necessity for a Soviet manager, and Soviet factories have by now almost reached the saturation point so far as college-trained technicians are concerned—something which is still far from true of American factories in spite of an identical trend. Though both lower and higher education is once more free in the USSR, state grants to university students have to be supplemented from the father's purse, which is not always possible for a worker to do.

The road up for a Soviet post-graduate junior executive, who usually starts straightaway on production as assistant foreman or in a similar post, is a hard one, with actual output as the main criterion of ability. Training in industrial and organizational leadership and "human relations" is non-existent, except for what may be learned of such matters through active work in the Komsomol. This is no doubt one reason for the perennial complaints about the rudeness and arrogance of Soviet managers toward their subordinates. From the initial "sink or swim" stage, only a few, by a process of elimination rather than of selection, move up into top management positions in the production hierarchy. Sometimes industrial executives, practically all of whom are party members, are transferred to party work, and in reverse party officials, who in general have the same sort of education and training, are ordered to take up posts in production. Thus, managers and party functionaries are not just the same type of people, but frequently are the very same individuals at different stages in their careers.

THE SOVIET manager is faced with other difficulties peculiar to his country. The Russians are still far from a solution of the old problem of balance between centralization of planning and decentralization of operational decisions on a local level. The chief sufferer is the middle-rank manager. Output is the criterion by which his performance is judged, and on which his bonus depends, yet he has no power of final decision. In matters of output and supply of materials and equipment, he is at the mercy of a top-heavy vertical bureaucracy.

The undependability of the system has resulted in a tendency on the part of individual Soviet factory managers to try to make their plants as self-sufficient as possible in regard to supplies, as well as repair and maintenance. This, in turn, has inevitably led to violations by plant managers of central regulations with regard to decision-making, but the central authorities have had to close their eyes to such violations if production was to be carried on. Thus, a *modus vivendi* has evolved—at a certain cost in terms of auxiliary labor, stocks of materials and equipment, etc.

However, as Mr. Granick points out, labor in the USSR still remains cheaper than machinery. By and large, there are still two Soviet workers doing the job done by one worker in the United States, a fact which partly accounts for the mammoth size of some Soviet factories. The Soviet ratio of white-collar to manual workers in industry is only two-thirds of the American, and the cost of central planning, considered on the basis of total numbers and not in terms of college-trained personnel, does not appear high to Mr. Granick. This, however, is certainly not the view of the Soviet top leaders. By the mid-1950's, the proportion of white-collar personnel to manual workers at and above plant level in the manufacturing and mining industries had been reduced from 27 percent as of 1940 to 20 percent; and the 1957 reorganization of industry was, *inter alia,* an attempt—not very successful—to effect a further reduction of the size of the white-collar bureaucracy. The corresponding proportions in the United States were 29 percent in the 1950's as against 16 percent prewar. But such a comparison is

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hardly valid in view of the great differences in degree of mechanization and overall output level.

The question of "who runs the business" in the two countries induces Mr. Granick to liken an American board of directors to the Soviet Party Presidium, and the stockholders of an American company to the rank-and-file Communist Party membership. This is quite an original analogy, and surprising or even scandalous as it may sound to many in both countries, it seems worthy of further exploration.

Income differences in the USSR are great, but the relative rate of advance in managerial incomes has slowed down even more than in America because, contrary to the situation in the early years of the Soviet regime, there now exists a trained and trusted Soviet managerial group. Though very distinct from the ordinary workers, this group cannot, in Mr. Granick's view, be regarded as a "new class" in the Marxist sense of the word. Nor can one claim the existence of a "managerial class" distinct from the party bureaucracy since both share the same privileges not enjoyed by the mass of the population.[1] In this sociological sense, they together constitute the new Soviet "upper class." Both groups have "enormous personal stakes" in the status quo and are fully conscious of it. It is in this fact, rather than in diminished economic competition or expanding trade contacts between East and West, that Mr. Granick sees the greatest hope for world stability and peace.

[1] For a different interpretation, see the article by Seweryn Bialer in this issue—Ed.

The Functionaries

The Soviet Bureaucratic Elite: A Case Study of the Ukrainian Apparatus,
by John A. Armstrong.
Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1959.

Stalin and the Soviet Communist Party: A Study in the Technology of Power,
by Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov.
Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1959.

Reviewed by R. V. Burks

PROFESSOR ARMSTRONG'S BOOK is the result of a serious, scholarly effort to get at the salient characteristics of the "new class" in the Soviet Union. By dint of extensive research—particularly in Soviet libraries, where he succeeded in obtaining access to a score of graduate theses pertaining to the problem of cadres, and in Soviet and Ukrainian newspapers, from which he built up a card file on some 2400 *apparatchiki* (party and government functionaries)—he has constructed a careful case study of the Ukrainian *apparat* in the years 1938-56. His conclusions will be of interest to those concerned with social stratification in the USSR and its effects on Soviet political life.

When he speaks of the *apparat,* Armstrong is referring to the governmental as well as the party bureaucracy. He believes that a regular interchange of personnel goes on between them, and that the two constitute in practice a single entity. Furthermore, he observes, there are grounds for a real community of interest between parallel sections of the party and state bureaucracy — *e.g.,* those concerned with agriculture — whereas constant tension may prevail between elements within either hierarchy. An example of this last is the longstanding quarrel between the propaganda arm of the party and its line officials (local secretaries). The propagandists run the newspapers and are charged with making public the weaknesses and failings of the local administration. The party secretaries retaliate by employing the propagandists in degrading and time-consuming tasks on the *kolkhoz* and in the factory. This is a typical cleavage between men with verbal skills and men with managerial skills.

Thus the Soviet bureaucratic elite is to be thought of not so much as a series of contending hierarchies—party, state, police, and so on—but more as a series of personal followings based on local interests and combining elements of all those hierarchies. The party, the police, the government, and the factory managers in the Donbas constitute a concrete if informal interest group, headed by the first secretary at Rostov. Similarly, the *apparatchiki,* the bureaucrats, and the managers of the Ukraine constitute a greater, but no less well-defined and influential political entity, led by the first secretary of the republic party organization.

Khrushchev's accession as Stalin's heir has meant the projection of the influence of the Ukrainian *apparat* onto the national scene, together with the transfer to Moscow of key Ukrainian personnel. The political practices which, from 1938 to 1948, were characteristic of the Ukrainian elite have tended to become practices at the national level. These include a greater emphasis on the primacy of the party *apparat,* a greater show of intra-

Mr. Burks is an American student of Soviet affairs and author of numerous scholarly articles in the field; he is now at work on a full-length study of the East European Communist parties.

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party democracy, and a tendency to move from autocracy to the rule of an oligarchy.

In this context the social characteristics of the Ukrainian elite assume added significance. In the composition of the elite Armstrong finds an overrepresentation of Russians and an underrepresentation of Jews. The first, he thinks, results naturally from the greater strength of communism in urban areas, where the Russian minority is concentrated. The second is probably the consequence of deliberate policy. There is also an underrepresentation of West Ukrainians — the populations added to the USSR as a consequence of the fourth partition of Poland and the military defeat of the Nazis. This is partly a result of the more rural character of the annexed districts, but it also reflects a greater intensity of Ukrainian national feeling in the area.

The typical *apparatchiki* at the republic and *oblast* (district) level were born some time between 1900 and 1907. Evidence on their social origin is scanty and likely to be biased, but in general suggests that they were of lower class background and more likely of peasant than of proletarian stock. They joined the party between 1921 and 1930, in the years when Stalin was establishing himself as Lenin's successor, and achieved leading positions in the *apparat* as a consequence of Stalin's great purge of 1937-38. Most of them had not, at the time they rose to prominence, completed secondary school; only a small minority could boast of a higher education, and these were usually engineers. As a rule the engineers were given party secretaryships in the industrial *oblasti,* while their less-educated comrades were assigned to predominantly rural districts—which did not prevent them from advancing more rapidly in the party hierarchy. Most of them managed, in the decade between 1939-49, to achieve the equivalent of a secondary education in a party school, with a curriculum including social science and the humanities. These men owe everything to the party. As one of Armstrong's *apparatchiki,* a foundling and former shepherd, remarked, "I was educated and led forward by the party."

Mr. Armstrong asserts that the time is coming when a secondary education will be a prerequisite for party membership and that the party statutes will openly recognize the stratification of Soviet society on the basis of educational attainments. Apparently he wrote in advance of recent evidence that Khrushchev is moving somewhat in the opposite direction, *i.e.,* toward a partial reduction of class differentiation in the USSR—as indicated, in the present context, by his educational reform and by the increased emphasis on recruiting worker and peasant elements into the party.[1] Nevertheless it remains true that many of the younger people entering the party —as well as the government bureaucracy—will be better-educated than their elders who control the *apparat.* It is thus valid for the author to speculate whether competitive tensions will develop, particularly if purges remain in abeyance and opportunities for promotion are correspondingly limited. Mr. Armstrong is inclined to think this will be the case.

[1] See Robert A. Feldmesser's article in this issue.—Ed.

AVTORKHANOV'S BOOK is entirely of another sort: impassioned, bitter, verbose, repetitious, contradictory. Of Caucasian origin, Avtorkhanov alternately attended the Institute of Red Professors and worked in the Press Bureau of the Central Committee in the years from 1928 to 1937. A supporter of Bukharin, he was arrested in the latter year. He escaped to Germany in 1943, where he has since lived. What he has written is not a scholarly study in the traditional academic sense, but something which is part autobiography, part "Kremlinology," and part analysis of the dynamics of the Soviet Communist Party. Withal he has a good deal to say about the new class and its characteristics.

Mr. Avtorkhanov would agree with Mr. Armstrong that the CPSU is Russian-dominated. He underscores the mistreatment and abuse of the minority populations, pointing to such measures of russification as the imposition of the Cyrillic alphabet on the native tongues of the peoples of Soviet Central Asia. But Avtorkhanov would not agree that the Soviet elite is mainly of lower-class roots. As early as 1934, he reminds us, the Central Committee ceased publishing data on the social origins of party members; five years later party regulations militating against the recruitment of intellectuals and favoring that of workers, were quietly dropped. (This author, too, evidently wrote before the recent change in recruitment policy.) Thus the predominant element of the party at command levels is, in Avtorkhanov's view, an elite of industrialists, engineers, professors, propagandists, agronomists, and other professionals.

While these premises are by no means uniquely the author's, the loose deductions and rumor-based inferences he draws from them are certainly original. Since the *apparatchiki* are of "alien social background," they must prove their "loyalty" to the proletariat by ruthlessness and fanatical devotion; the careers of Vyshinsky, Bulganin and Malenkov are explained primarily in these terms. The author holds further that the party delights in any such blemishes on the records of its cadres, whether the skeleton in the closet concerns class origin or is of some other nature. Mikoyan's "peculiar" escape from the British firing squad at Baku in 1919 is cited

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as a case in point. He was captured, along with other "workers" of the Baku Soviet, by the British occupation forces; most of his fellow prisoners were shot, but Mikoyan, according to Avtorkhanov, saved himself by agreeing to work as a British agent. Stalin is alleged to have had a file on the case, which he held against the time when Mikoyan should get out of line. The story is intriguing but this reviewer, for one, wonders how a low-ranking official of the propaganda section of the Central Committee could have had access to such information.

The author also seems guilty of over-generalization when he claims that the controlling elite is comprised of mediocre people without talent or imagination. But there is certainly truth in his statement that the creative intellectuals were driven out of the party in the course of the purges of the Trotskyites and the Bukharinites. A speech by one of the old Bolsheviks — Zinoviev or Kamenev, for example—was an original creation, with the clear imprint of the speaker's personality, whereas the dogmatic utterances of a Malenkov, a Molotov or an Andreyev could only be identified by the signature.

The obverse side of the coin of mediocrity is careerism and ideological cynicism. The author holds (with others) that ideological conviction is in fact a danger to the party, because it could compete with the supreme requirement of slavish obedience; he maintains further that the great ideological heresies, whether they bore the name of Bukharin or Skrypnik, mirrored the inarticulate desires of the masses of Soviet citizens, and in this sense represent a continuing latent threat to the regime.

The men at the top are free of moral as well as ideological imperatives. Suspicion, duplicity and treachery were the moral code of Stalinism—and the golden rule: "Do not say what you think and do not think what you say." The author has no reason to suppose that the *apparatchiki* who rode to power by this code harbor inhibiting "remnants" of bourgeois morality.

VIEWING the leadership, in sum, as men with neither conviction nor principle, and mediocre in their abilities, Avtorkhanov concludes that in the long run they can rule Russia and defy the world only by a return to the systematic application of terror, for without it the *apparat* itself would come apart at the seams. He therefore maintains that Khrushchev's current policy of "socialist legality," enlisting the positive cooperation of the masses, can only be a transition leading either to the dissolution of the Soviet regime or—what is more likely—to a reimposition of Stalinist terror. Molotov opposed Khrushchev's denigration of Stalin, and strategically Molotov was right. Without the permanent purge, the perpetual state of siege, the Soviet system cannot endure —and if that system is now called communism, Stalinism remains its essence.

Mr. Avtorkhanov's book may be interesting and lively, but it is not very useful. His interpretation of the new class borders on demonology; what he presents is, curiously enough, a kind of inverted and oversimplified Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, with the Stalinists taking the place of the capitalists as the source of all evil, exploitation, terror and war. By contrast, Mr. Armstrong's plodding, patient and many-tabled presentation, while it produces nothing startling, brings into sharper focus than before our picture of the Soviet new class. It may also be noted that his portrait of the typical leader, painstakingly drawn from statistical evidence, is strikingly personified by the top *apparatchik* of them all, Nikita Khrushchev—"self-made" man of Great Russian stock, peasant-born, "educated and led forward by the party." Whether the sources of tension within the new class are in fact more regional than hierarchical in nature, and whether a conflict of generations within the party is in the making, are hypotheses worth more investigation.

The Police

The Secret World,
by Peter Deriabin and Frank Gibney.
Doubleday and Co., Inc., New York, 1959.

In the Name of Conscience,
by Nikolai Khokhlov.
David McKay Co., Inc., New York, 1959.

Beria's Gardens,
by Unto Parvilahti.
E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1960.

Reviewed by Leon Gouré

IN THE AGE OF the so-called "spirit of Camp David," of exchange visits between Soviet and Western leaders, and of loudly if somewhat hesitantly professed hopes of peaceful coexistence, there is a tendency to forget the past nature of Soviet totalitarianism and to speculate about the possibility that the red leopard, in changing

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its spots, has become harmless. This impression has been assiduously cultivated by the new Soviet leaders who have attempted, with mixed success, to pass themselves off as well-meaning men who always opposed but were powerless to curb the excesses of the Stalin era.

In line with this portrait, the most striking change in the Soviet Union has been the reduction of open police terror and the increased reliance on the party as an instrument of control and persuasion. "Soviet legality" is now said to be the order of the day; the prison camps have been greatly depopulated, and their dreaded administrative agency, the MVD, has been abolished. The Soviet regime presumably feels that after 40 years of Socialist "education," its people can be "trusted"; its enemies, with a few exceptions, are now said to be foreign agents rather than native conspirators.

The suspension of mass terror has certainly made Khrushchev seem a more palatable companion for coexistence and has paved the way for his warmer reception in the West. But if the non-Communist countries are to entertain serious hopes of coexistence and effective negotiation with the present Soviet Union, they must show greater wisdom than ever in assessing its character. They cannot afford to forget that its masters are the heirs and the products of nearly 30 years of Stalinist rule, nor that totalitarianism rests in the final analysis on force.

THE BOOKS UNDER REVIEW are timely reminders of this. They are "inside" accounts of the police system as seen by two of its agents and one of its victims. They also shed considerable light on the life and character of the "new class" of Soviet officialdom, adding to our knowledge of its role, strength and vulnerabilities. To be sure, all three books were written some years after the events described in them; but a judgment of their value, from the vantage point taken here, rests not in what changes may have taken place but in how reliable the authors' observations are for the period they cover. There is a tendency in accounts dealing with the activities of the Soviet secret police to exaggerate its efficiency and effectiveness, and to report somewhat uncritically what were rumors and unverified stories of larger events. The books reviewed suffer to a certain but unequal degree from this shortcoming. In any event the reader is probably well-advised to distinguish between accounts of the authors' personal experiences and those which relate to happenings outside their direct knowledge.

The most valuable volume by far is that of Mr. Peter Deriabin as written by Mr. Frank Gibney. Mr. Deriabin's unusual experiences provide interesting material for students of the Soviet Union. Born in 1921, on a farm in Siberia, he joined the Komsomol and taught party history to high school students. During the war he rose to the rank of party secretary of an infantry regiment, fought at Moscow, Stalingrad and Odessa, and after being twice wounded was selected for training at a counter-intelligence school. His background led to his appointment, soon after the war, as a captain in the state security apparatus (MGB) and launched him on a career as a case officer in Barnaul. From there he went, in 1947, to the Guard Directorate, which is charged with the security of the Soviet leaders. There he remained until 1952, when he transferred to the Foreign Intelligence Directorate. In 1954, while on duty as a state security counter-intelligence officer in Vienna, charged with watching Soviet civilian and diplomatic personnel, he defected to the West.

Mr. Deriabin's story provides a valuable description of the organization, staffing, training, functions and methods of operation of various departments of the state security police. Of these, the most interesting and least known in the West is the Guard Directorate. At the time Mr. Deriabin served in it, it was at the peak of its power. Like a Chinese emperor, Stalin lived with his lieutenants in a city within the city of Moscow. This inner city comprised not only the Kremlin, but also a ring about one mile in radius in which were located the security agencies. Only the Kremlin was overtly guarded by uniformed MVD men; the rest of the area was under the surveillance of an army of secret agents in civilian clothing, who maintained a constant watch over every street and every block. Stalin, the beloved leader of the world proletariat, who lived on a daily diet of the "cult of personality," never appeared at a Moscow parade or demonstration without a batallion of security forces stationed in the basement of Lenin's mausoleum, while other troops were concealed nearby and machine-gun posts were mounted on the roofs of surrounding buildings. In addition to these guard units, Stalin was protected at all times by a personal guard company of 406 men.

THIS VAST security scheme allegedly succeeded in safeguarding Stalin against a number of assassination attempts, some of which are described in the book. These

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include a shooting by a would-be assassin in the Caucasus in 1930, a plot in 1942 by the German *Abwehr* to send a defected Soviet officer to Moscow to kill Stalin, and a conspiracy in 1947 among members of the Moscow militia to assassinate the Politburo. The details of the latter two plots appear rather fantastic, and it is regrettable that Mr. Deriabin and his collaborator do not specify the sources of the information, especially since there is always room for supposing that the security police might have had reason to exaggerate the seriousness of the threat and to magnify the scope of the conspiracies.

The most significant comment on the character of politics around Stalin is the account of how in 1942 a disgruntled Russian soldier entered the Red Square, carrying his rifle, and managed to fire three shots at Mikoyan's car. Although the Red Square was guarded by some 40 armed state security agents, they did not dare to act immediately without orders because "they could not be sure that someone in higher authority had not sent him" (p. 112)—thus the guards themselves sought higher "clearance" before shooting the soldier. Characteristically, severe discipline for this episode not only was imposed on the security unit and officers involved, but reached wide and high in the army contingent of the renegade.

A CONSIDERABLE PORTION of the book is devoted to the character and operations of the Foreign Intelligence Directorate of the state security police. The functions of the Soviet "intelligence" apparatus go far beyond those of its counterparts in other countries; it is viewed as an "aggressive political arm of the regime," which not only collects information, but also manufactures it, destroys sources of foreign information, terrorizes, assassinates and proselytizes (p. 183). It not only will organize espionage rings in foreign countries, but will infiltrate and sabotage foreign political organizations or installations when possible, kidnap or murder opponents when necessary, and also keep a check on the "fraternal" Communist leaders of satellite countries. Among its operations described in detail in the book are the kidnapping of Dr. Linse, a deputy of the President of the Free Jurists in West Berlin, a plan to blow up the water reservoirs of West Berlin, and what Mr. Deriabin believes to have been a successful blackmail of Otto John, West Germany's security chief who in 1954 defected to East Germany only to return later to the West.

Despite the great opportunities and means at the disposal of the security police, its intelligence operations were, in Mr. Deriabin's experience, often clumsy or short-sighted, and many of its schemes failed. He attributes this to two factors. The first is the extreme centralization of the system, leading to lack of initiative on the tactical level and slavish execution of orders from Moscow, no matter how unrealistic they might be—and thus the need to lie and place the blame elsewhere when operations failed. The second is the exaggerated suspicion pervading the entire state security organization, leading to distrust of its own agents.

MR. DERIABIN ADDS some very interesting if unprovable details to behind-the-scene events at the time of Stalin's death and in the subsequent struggle for succession. Parts of his account differ in some respects from that given by other writers in the West. He states, for example, that the attack against Beria's control of the security organization started in 1951-52 and was led by Malenkov, Bulganin and Khrushchev (p. 167); that although their forces succeeded in removing Beria's henchman Abakumov from control of the MGB, the real power passed to Ryumin, another Beria man, while the official head, Ignatiev, "was a weak party functionary" (p. 166). The "doctors' plot" of late 1952 is described as another scheme aimed at undermining Beria which was probably instigated by A.N. Poskrebyshev, head of Stalin's personal secretariat.

Following Stalin's death, Beria attempted to consolidate his hold on the state security organs and plotted to seize power. He is reported to have planted microphones in the offices of all the Presidium members and to have planned a *coup* for June 27, 1953, the day after his arrest. His greatest mistake, according to this account, is having trusted one of his deputies, Sergei Kruglov, who sold out to the opposition, wired Beria's office and kept Bulganin informed of the plot. As part of his plan Beria reportedly persuaded General Artemev, Commander of the Moscow Military District, to send his troops on maneuvers in order to leave Moscow at the mercy of Beria's state security forces. But Bulganin and his associates called in armored troops from other districts and Beria was arrested.

In these various internal upheavals, as in past power struggles at the top, the state security forces suffered repeated purges. The life of a state security career-officer, while it had many attractions such as power and a high standard of living, was also fraught with dangers, and the higher the officer rose the more uncertain his future became.

It is unfortunate that the reader is not able to tell where Mr. Deriabin, as narrator, leaves off and Mr.

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Gibney, as writer, begins; such a distinction would have been desirable in view of the frequent omission of precise sources of the information presented. Moreover, the discussion of post-1954 developments lack inside knowledge since Mr. Deriabin had by then defected to the West. The reader must also keep in mind that descriptions of the operations of the secret police are based mainly on the Stalin period.

DESPITE SOME FAILINGS, *The Secret World* is well worth reading. Unfortunately this is not the case with Mr. Khokhlov's account of his adventures. Mr. Khokhlov was an agent of the Special Operations Bureau—the so-called Spetsburo—of the Foreign Intelligence Directorate, whose terroristic functions included murder, kidnapping and other acts of violence. He was recruited in 1941 during the battle of Moscow, and by his own report defected in 1954 when he refused to assassinate a leader of the Russian émigré organization in Germany called NTS.

Mr. Khokhlov paints a dual portrait of himself as a highly-prized agent yet as an unwilling captive of the security police, a man who in more than a dozen years of service, managed to avoid performing any of the tasks demanded of him—with the one exception of the wartime murder of Kube, the German *gauleiter* in Belorussia, and even then someone else did the actual deed. He is so absorbed in projecting this image and in explaining that his defection was due to conscience rather than to any fear for his personal welfare, that he fails to provide what would have been more useful information on the organization or general operations of the state security police. Moreover, most of his account is fictionalized in the form of conversations whose *verbatim* content he could hardly be expected to remember, so that the reader is unable to decide which parts of his story are straight fact. The book must finally be criticized as an effort to propagandize the NTS, presenting a misleading account of its political character, influence and scope of operations. In actuality, the NTS is a political organization with strong fascist and totalitarian leanings, and with a record of prewar and wartime collaboration with the Nazis. Since 1945 it has sought western support through exaggerated if not wholly false claims of controlling underground operations within the Soviet Union.

MR. UNTO PARVILAHTI'S BOOK turns the coin over in relating the experiences of a victim of the secret police. He was deported from Finland to Russia in 1944, served five years in work camps and jails for "counterrevolutionary activities abroad" (he had been in Berlin as a liaison officer of the Finnish Volunteer Corps during the war), and then spent another four years in forced residence at Dudinka, a settlement above the Arctic Circle. Accounts of Soviet concentration camps and prisons are no longer new, but because Mr. Parvilahti's involuntary visit to "Beria's Gardens" took place during the immediate postwar purge, he provides an especially interesting view of the foreigners, "traitors" and small people who then filled the Soviet jails. Among his co-prisoners were several notable figures—*e.g.,* the Swedish diplomat and Red Cross official, Raoul Wallenberg, and various German and Balkan leaders.

Mr. Parvilahti's description of his later years in the Soviet arctic is well worth reading. He worked in a variety of jobs there, and offers useful comment on the administrative, financial and labor practices in smaller enterprises as well as in other elements of the local economy. Also noteworthy is his report of a war scare in the Soviet Union during 1952, serious enough for the authorities to issue black-out regulations and to install anti-aircraft guns in Dudinka and on tugs and barges in the nearby Yenisei River.

WHILE FOCUSING primarily on the secret police, all three accounts reviewed here also shed light on the extent to which the Soviet bureaucratic elite is motivated by material interests, and the degree to which the system operates at all levels on the basis of favoritism, influence and bribery. Such conditions prevent the stabilization of the "new class" and encourage the intrigues and denunciations on which the KGB (successor to the MGB) thrives.

The abolition of the MVD, far from weakening the role of the KGB has probably strengthened it. It is noteworthy in this connection that no issue was raised about finding new employment for personnel of the defunct agency, as was the case following the recent reduction in the armed forces. It also seems significant that a large number of security officers were elected in 1959 to the Supreme Soviet.

In short, while the KGB's role has been somewhat muted at home, it remains an important buttress of Khrushchev's power and a valuable operational instrument of Soviet foreign policy. There is no guarantee that the regime would not again augment the police power should difficulties develop in exercising control. While one should be ready—always—to look for genuine change, it would be wise to remember that the leopard in most docile mood is, after all, still a leopard, not a purring cat.

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The Party and the Universities

IN 1958 GOSPOLITIZDAT, the Soviet Union's State Publishing House of Political Literature, issued a seemingly innocuous volume of 142 pages entitled *O partiinoi rabote v vuzakh* (On Party Work in Higher Educational Institutions). The book—a symposium of reports by party workers on their activities in Soviet universities and technical institutes—was put out as part of a series aimed at aiding CPSU members "on questions of party work." Perhaps a more important motive behind its publication is suggested, however, by its striking graphic revelation of the controls exercised by the Soviet Communist Party over higher education in the USSR. While a few rare references to party control have appeared in other sources, such as *Vestnik Vysshei shkoly* (Higher School Journal) or *Partiinaia zhizn* (Party Life), the general tendency of both professional and party journals has been to conceal the direct power of the political authorities attached to educational institutions. The present symposium, by pulling together in a single volume a number of illustrations of how party controls operate, admits their existence in a manner which is unprecedented.

The volume contains 21 articles, all written by the secretaries of party bureaus at individual institutes or universities located in the RSFSR. The party bureau at any educational establishment is a primary party organization, reporting directly to the local district or city party apparatus and supervising in turn the activities of the Communist members of the faculty, research departments, trade unions and Komsomol organization. In numerical terms, at least, the latter groups constitute a strong element in the university community. According to an earlier official source, the ratio of party membership among Soviet "scientific workers"—*i.e.*, professors, instructors and researchers—was 42 percent in 1956 (96,800 out of a total 223,900), compared to 40 percent in 1950 and 37 percent in 1947.[1] And it is generally estimated that about 80 to 90 percent of the student body in any institution is affiliated with the Komsomol (Communist Youth League).[2]

The volume opens with an introductory essay by A. Makhov, an official of the RSFSR department of science, schools and culture of the CPSU Central Committee. He notes that the present symposium is the first attempt to analyze the results of party work in higher educational institutions. His main theme is that teaching staffs must act as more than mere educators, and that it is the responsibility of the party to see that they do so. Asserting that the majority of over 100,000 professors and instructors in the RSFSR are "trained, Marxist-educated cadres," he states that "if all of them saw their task not as giving the students specialized knowledge but also as formulting the world outlook [of the students] . . . by virtue of their own example, education would be much more successful"; but unfortunately, ". . . there are still teachers to be found who avoid such work and consider it the business of public bodies or of the departments of party history, political economy and philosophy." Thus: "Party organizations must exert their influence on such teachers and make them participate actively in the ideological and political education of the student body" (pp. 7-8). Makhov also calls for the party's greater reliance on the Komsomol, by giving it a share of the planning responsibility in all concerns of a higher educational institution—including practical training, laboratory work, research projects, stipends, admissions, *etc.* (p. 10).

How can such ends be accomplished without overt party control? Makhov answers in describing the means by which the party authorities bring pressure to bear:

> **The party organization of a VUZ [higher educational institution], like that of any other organization, does not have the right of control over administrative activity. But this situation does not mean that the party organization cannot hear [reports] from the heads of VUZ faculties and departments at meetings of the party bureaus, party committees or party conferences. Similarly this does not release party organizations from putting questions to the administration regarding the improved preparation and education of future specialists and from carrying through various measures in this direction.**

THE AMOUNT OF LEEWAY allowed by this interpretation of authority becomes obvious in the reports which follow in the symposium.

I. Sretensky, secretary of the party bureau at the Yaroslavl Pedagogical Institute, asserts that "purely 'academic' training in any of the sciences is impossible

[1] *Kulturnoe stroitelstvo SSSR,* Moscow, 1956, p. 248.

[2] *Partiinaia zhizn,* No. 1, January 1958, p. 18: 98 percent enrollment is claimed at the Leningrad Institute of Water Transport Engineers; see *O partiinoi rabote v vuzakh,* Moscow, 1958, p. 112.

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in our times." Therefore the party organization must aim at having any discipline—"from mathematics and physics to the natural sciences and geography—saturated with Marxist-Leninist *partiinost* [party-mindedness]" (p. 19).

The first "remedy" against students' having apolitical attitudes toward studies is to make sure that no faculty member retains such attitudes. The party organization at the Tomsk Polytechnical Institute—having been scored by higher party authorities for ineffective political work among faculty members—reports that it instituted special faculty seminars dealing with both the practical application of research and Communist dogma. A report at one such session was entitled: "V. I. Lenin on the Meaning of Electrification for the Construction of Socialism and Communism in the USSR" (p. 60).

Setting up seminars is only one of the party's tasks. I. Antonova, party secretary of the geography faculty at Moscow State University, outlines in some detail the activities and channels through which the party organization exerts its influence (pp. 100-101). She reveals that members of the party bureau and other Communists actively participate in meetings of the academic council of the institution, and that the bureau secretary is "urged" to address these meetings; that party members discuss questions of scientific and academic work among themselves, at meetings of the party bureau and at open and closed party conferences; that the bureau is kept informed by reports from subordinate party groups, department heads, and individual Communists at the institution; and that bureau members in turn hold private discussions with both Communist and non-party scholars. So that the bureau will understand what it is doing, the writer goes on, the Communists try to elect members who are knowledgeable in scientific and scholarly work (of 11 members at the time of writing, two held the doctorate and six the degree of candidate of sciences). The bureau is said to guide the activity of more than 300 "scientific and technical workers" and about 1,700 students. The Communists on the faculty are subordinate to the bureau and are regarded as "organizers" of scientific work.

Another article reports that the party bureau of the Orenburg Agricultural Institute regularly reviews the work of individual departments. On one occasion it found that the departments of physics and agricultural mechanization were not up to the required academic standards; accordingly, "the party bureau had to recommend to the directorate of the institute that two teachers be released from their lecture duties" (p. 7). Other lecturers were given a warning.

ALTHOUGH THE WORD "control" is generally eschewed in the symposium and does not, apparently, appear in the party statutes guiding the work of cadres in educational institutions, it is used every now and then by some of the authors. For instance, V. Melnikov, party secretary at the Institute of Agricultural Machine Construction in Rostov-on-Don, speaks of the "control" established by his bureau in setting up a training and research arrangement between the Institute and a nearby machinebuilding plant—and of the "strict control" exercised by individual departmental party groups in implementing the project (p. 80). Similarly, the party committee at Saratov State University lists "control over the study plan" as one of the questions it "continuously discusses" at its meetings (along with "the quality of teaching, . . . methodological work, the practical training of students and many other matters": p. 37).

A party organization may also be active in disciplinary actions against students. A student of the law faculty at Kazan State University, for instance, was accused of breaching study discipline and of being insolent and dishonest. The dean apparently tried to bring him into line "but administrative measures proved of no effect." The party bureau and party committee thereupon decided to judge the youth at a meeting of his fellow students, in the presence of party and Komsomol representatives and of his professors. The unanimous decision was for his expulsion (p. 32).

IDEOLOGICAL work among students is carried on by the departments of social science jointly with the party and Komsomol committees. Together they decide upon the progress of students, discuss the preparation of seminars, and organize student and faculty debates on current topics (pp. 24 ff). The task in teaching the social sciences is "to formulate the Communist world outlook of the future specialist, to bring out in him high moral qualities and socialist norms of behavior" (p. 31).

The party bureau of the Leningrad Institute of Water Transport Engineers decided that party members should fully direct the Komsomol organization. As a result, party

The Dialectics of Growth

QUERY: *Does the appointment of a greater number of secretaries of the party indicate the increasing role of the Central Committee of the Communist Party?*

KHRUSHCHEV: *You understand this question correctly. Yes, the changes you have mentioned indicate the continually strengthening role of the Communist Party in the life of our country, and evidently this role will continue to increase.*

—Interview with Iverach McDonald of The Times, London, Jan. 31, 1958; TASS, February 15, 1958.

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activitists participate in all student activities. Members of the party bureau attend Komsomol committee meetings and take part in its proceedings. If Komsomol members complain about any study course, the party bureau undertakes to "review the work of the department, subject the department chairman and instructors to severe criticism, and ask the faculty head and [faculty] party organization to eliminate the shortcomings" (pp. 109 ff.)

A few more examples will complete the picture: At the Ural Polytechnical Institute the party bureau "had to get involved in the organization of course work and diploma projects" (p. 48). At another institution the party bureau "approved" the suggestion of departmental party groups to discuss the teaching process at Komsomol meetings, with student participation (pp. 72-73). The party committee of the Moscow Institute of Transport Engineers was instrumental in obtaining laboratory equipment, through requests to higher party organizations and to the local *raion* (district) committee (p. 104). Party authorities at Saratov State University drafted a proposal to revamp the system of correspondence courses; it was accepted by the directorate of the university (p. 38).

THE SUM EFFECT of the reports in the symposium is to prove what has been generally known but not officially acknowledged in the USSR: that the Communist Party exercises authoritative control over all phases of Soviet education. The interesting—and significant—development is that this fact is being mentioned more and more openly. The key to an explanation may be found in the following quotation from a recent issue of *Voprosy filosofii* (Problems of Philosophy):

. . . the role of the Communist Party as a leading and organizing force in Soviet society is expanding constantly. The widening role of the party in the development of society represents in itself an objectively inevitable, legal process. Evidence of this is . . . the expanding role of [party-controlled] public bodies in the management of societal affairs, the ever-increasing assumption by these public bodies of functions of the Soviet government, such as agricultural-organizational and cultural-educational [activities], as well as . . . a number of other functions until now performed by governmental organs. . . .[3]

In other words, the state keeps withering away, and the party, in effect the supreme "public body," is increasingly assuming its functions. The publicizing of its activities is an acknowledgement of the role it is playing —in the present instance, in higher education. It has, of course, always played that role, but new emphasis on the fiction of the withering state is bringing the fact into the open.

The party's leading role in Soviet society can hardly be challenged; its present membership of 8.25 million members forms a chain of command that reaches into every phase of Soviet life.[4] Among the subsidiary "public bodies" which it controls, the Komsomol now numbers 18 million and trade union membership is as large as the total Soviet labor force.[5] It appears that the leaders of the Soviet Union in general, and Khrushchev in particular, have decided the time has come to bring the party "closer to life" and to focus public attention on the beneficent role it is allegedly playing. Instead of maintaining an invisible guiding hand, the party is apparently ordering its functionaries to participate publicly in certain spheres of the national life, including the educational process.

This conclusion is supported to some degree by the recent administrative reorganization in higher education, transferring to the individual union republics the primary responsibility for organizing institutions in their respective areas in line with Khrushchev's economic and educational reforms.[6] The purpose of the decentralization is to adjust educational and training programs to the demands of the economic regions into which the country is now divided.[7] At the same time, the reorganization provides the party with an opportunity for more direct control over education. Among the measures it may pursue, for example, is a plan proposed some time ago to incorporate party organizations of schools and institutes into the party units of those economic enterprises with which the schools are linked.[8]

Viewing all of the above developments as part of a deliberate strategy, it seems clear that the party will be playing an ever greater role in organizing Soviet society at the grassroots.

Jaan Pennar

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[3] V. V. Nikolaev, "Vozrastanie rukovodiashchei roli KPSS v period razvernutovo stroitelstva kommunizma" (The growth of the leading role of the CPSU in the period or the developing construction of communism), *Voprosy filosofii,* No. 10, 1959,

[4] *Ibid.* At the time of the 21st CPSU Congress in 1959 the party claimed 8,239,000 members and candidate members.

[5] As of April 1, 1958, there were 18,092,538 Komsomol members; *Partiinaia zhizn,* No. 18, September, 1958, p. 63.

[6] See *Pravda,* June 27, 1959, p. 1.

[7] Cf. leading article in *Vestnik vysshei shkoly,* No. 8, August 1959, pp. 3-6.

[8] *Partiinaia zhizn,* No. 19, October, 1958, p. 25.

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"All the News That's Fit to Print"?

ONE OF THE OBSERVATIONS which has become almost commonplace in the reports of foreigners who have traveled in the Soviet Union is that after 42 years of massive propaganda indoctrination large numbers of Soviet citizens still appear to have remained immune to its effects. The Soviet press has confirmed this on innumerable occasions by railing at public apathy and complaining of the failure of domestic propaganda to reach wider segments of the population.

In a determined effort to make Soviet propaganda and agitation more effective, the Khrushchev regime has sought, almost from the start, to break away from the hidebound patterns of presentation established by a quarter-century of Stalinism. This has been particularly true in the field of the press, which has been encouraged to experiment with the techniques of popular journalism.

Khrushchev personally initiated the change in December 1953 when, as the new First Secretary of the Communist Party, he addressed a conference of the country's leading newspaper editors and urged the need for livelier journalism. His 35 year-old son-in-law, Alexei Adzhubei, first as editor of the Young Communist League newspaper *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* and since last May as editor of the government organ *Izvestia,* has led the new trend toward a sprightlier press.

The trend was slow to gain momentum in the face of deeply ingrained inhibitions and controls which for a long time continued to impose strict conformity, even while the journalists were being encouraged to try fresh modes of expression. For several years the trend toward popular journalism was confined to a handful of newspapers, and even there it suffered a setback with the return to closer regimentation after the Hungarian uprising of October 1956. The signal for renewed conformity was given by Khrushchev's reprimands to writers who had ventured to present critical views of Soviet society. "The press cannot be placed in unreliable hands," he told the writers in 1957—and his warning did not go unheeded.

Within the past year, however, the tendency toward popular journalism has spread rapidly. It has taken the form of breezy make-up, briefer writing, greater attention to news, a rare indulgence in apolitical stories (such as the reports of the sighting of the abominable snowman in the Pamirs), the use of headlines and photos designed to catch the eye, and concern with topics of everyday living. Some newspapers have reduced the amount of space given to the less important official communiques.

A factor which undoubtedly spurred these recent changes in Soviet journalistic style was the fear repeatedly voiced by ideologists of the regime that Soviet minds might be influenced by greater contact with the foreign world under the policies of peaceful coexistence and freer cultural interchange. "There must be no ideological disarmament" has become a familiar slogan. But the problem is how to hold the Soviet reader's interest in competition with the attraction of foreign ideas.

The changes in the press have been confined almost entirely to form and manner of presentation. Nevertheless, there is the danger that the granting of a measure of freedom in regard to style may, as in literature, encourage "deviations" in content. A strictly regimented press is easier to control than newspapers encouraged to find individualistic ways of expression. Probably for this reason, old-line editors and propaganda officials, still entrenched in positions of power, have shown distrust of the new trend in journalism and have voiced occasional criticisms and warnings against "sensationalism."

Effective popular journalism presents an additional problem: It requires skill of a high order. Most of the older Soviet journalists and all the officials controlling the press have come directly from the ranks of the party, and their training in the journalism departments of party schools placed less emphasis on the development of working skills than on party indoctrination and ideology. Even the new crop of young journalists—graduates of the university schools of journalism established in the past decade—suffers from inadequate professional preparation as a consequence of overemphasis on ideological courses in the curricula of these institutions.

IT WAS AGAINST THIS background that the First Congress of Soviet Journalists took place in Moscow November 12-14, 1959. The congress formally brought into being the new Union of Soviet Journalists, the establishment of which after four years of organizational work endows Soviet newspapermen with professional status. The Union (distinct from the cultural workers' trade union, to which newspapermen belong) is comparable to the other professional associations of writers, musicians and other high-prestige groups among the Soviet intelligentsia. It includes representatives of radio and television.

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The congress divided its emphasis between craftsmanship—described by *Izvestia* as "the word probably heard most often from the congress platform"—and reassertions of the Soviet journalist's complete subservience to the regime. But there was no question as to which theme predominated. It was succinctly summed up in *Pravda's* comment, "We see the journalist as primarily a political worker."

M. A. Suslov, Presidium member and Central Committee Secretary long identified with Stalinist controls in ideological fields, struck the keynote of the congress in a message of greetings from the party Central Committee stressing "intolerance of ideological waverings and revisionism" and "an uncompromising attitude toward bourgeois ideology." These phrases not only were incorporated in the formal statutes of the Union, but were repeated in almost all the congress speeches, in the press comment on the proceedings, and—coupled with a profuse pledge of the journalists' loyalty—in a message of reply from the congress to the Central Committee.

THE PARTY'S control of the press was fully reflected in the composition of both the new Union and the congress. Pavel A. Satyukov, editor of the party organ *Pravda*, delivered the main report to the congress and was chosen chairman of the board of the Union. He announced that, of 60,000 Soviet journalists, 23,000 (described as "professionally the most active") had been enrolled in the Union. Of these, 77 percent are party members. No less than 96 percent of the 751 congress delegates were party members. "In effect, our congress is a congress of party journalists," declared M. D. Ovsyannikova, chairman of the credentials committee. "The tasks of the Union," said Satyukov, "are determined by the decisions and directives of our party."

In a speech at a Kremlin reception for the delegates, Premier Khrushchev indicated the role of Soviet journalists by describing them as the party's "right-hand assistants" (*podruchniie*—a word suggestive of "hand-maidens") "because they are always at hand." He went on to complain of the boring nature of many Soviet newspapers.

Neither Khrushchev nor any of the congress speakers, of course, related monotony and dullness in Soviet journalism to the regime's requirement of ideological conformity. But even so, the dilemma of a press now expected to be sparkling and original without deviating from approved ideological formulas underlay many of the statements made during the congress. Speaking of dull headlines, Adzhubei remarked: "Of course, the easiest thing is to leave them just the way certain organizations hand them to us." In an article on the congress, writer Sergei Mikhalkov asked: "Why shouldn't we write for the public demand? Why should our newspapers be indigestible? Why have some newspapermen double-checked and ironed out articles until they turn into a string of truly rigid formulations?" Mikhalkov discreetly did not answer the questions he raised, but contented himself with the comment that the situation is beginning to change.

The same dilemma was also implicit in a comment by Boris Polevoi, a special correspondent of *Pravda*, who wrote: "An orchestra cannot perform a musical work if the only instruments heard are, say, the violins and the drums. It is the same with a newspaper." Even L. F. Ilyichev, head of the Union Republics division of Agitprop (the party's Agitation and Propaganda Department, which controls the press), asked: "Why has our press not yet printed thoughtful, good studies of the cultural development of the workers at this or that factory, their state of mind, the growth of labor productivity or the problems of mutual relations within the collective of workers? Why do bourgeois sociologists and philosophers concern themselves with these questions, while our experienced journalists avoid them? Probably because we have not given [our journalists] the taste for these questions. But the time is coming when it will be necessary to take them up."

Polevoi, Mikhalkov and other advocates of brighter journalism particularly emphasized the need for more

The Winged Burden

KHRUSHCHEV: *Dear Comrade journalists! We call writers the party's helpers. Please do not take offense if I say that you journalists are not faithful helpers but literally right-hand assistants to our party, active fighters for its great cause.* (Stormy applause.) *Why assistants? Because you are really always at hand to assist the party. As soon as any decision has been explained and carried out, we turn to you; and you, as the most faithful driving belt, take the party's decision and carry it into the very midst of our people.* (Prolonged applause.)

The strength of our party lies in its inseparable bonds with the masses. The strength of our press, the source of its great influence, lies in the substance of what it carries to the masses. This substance is the Leninist policy of our party, the Leninist ideas on the building of socialism and communism. It is easy to carry such a burden; it does not weigh anything. (Stormy applause.)

V. A. KARPINSKY: *We carry this burden with enthusiasm.*

N. S. KHRUSHCHEV: *Yes, we all carry this burden with enthusiasm. This burden is not too heavy; one does not feel such a burden; it gives us wings, it calls us and leads us forward.* (Stormy applause.)

—From Khrushchev's speech at a Kremlin reception for Soviet journalists on Nov. 14, 1959: Pravda, Nov. 18, 1959.

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news from abroad. "Interest in foreign news is so great that you can no longer feed the reader Tass sea-biscuits," commented Polevoi (obviously referring to the dull nature of the Tass agency's dispatches from overseas, on which most Soviet newspapers rely as their only source of foreign news).

While going along with the pressure for greater leeway of expression, members of the Old Guard warned against the dangers which might result. Newspaper satirists, noted Satyukov, "hold a very sharp weapon in their hands, and they are obliged to use it very carefully in order, as Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev put it colorfully, not to turn their fire on their own forces." In a long speech which foreshadowed the January 1960 decree intensifying party propaganda, Ilyichev implied that the newspapers' new preoccupation with topics of everyday living and morality—which provide some of the most interesting material in the more popular papers—had resulted in neglect of propaganda writings on Marxist-Leninist theory, and he demanded that the authority of the newspapers' Marxist-Leninist propaganda departments be restored. Despite his admission that writing on theory had been dull and lifeless, the only formula Ilyichev had to offer to solve the conflict between dullness and the need for holding the attention of the public was the same as set forth in the propaganda decree two months later: make the propaganda livelier. Neither his speech at the congress nor the decree explained how this was to be done within the confines of a narrow set of uniform ideas. Newspapermen and propagandists alike were advised to take a lesson from Khrushchev's vigorous style, but the fact that Khrushchev can indulge in bold turns of speech without fear of penalty for "deviationism" was not pointed out.

IN ALL THIS, what of the reader? Shortly before the congress a Central Committee investigation of newspaper circulation disclosed that the reader has become increasingly selective and critical as the choice offered him has expanded. The newsprint allocations to Soviet papers are determined arbitrarily on the basis of the party's judgment of the needs of each paper and its political importance. In the past, when the demand for newspapers greatly exceeded the supply because of paper shortages, there was no need to worry about returns from the newsstands. In recent years, however, the situation has changed greatly: while the shortage of newsprint, and hence of newspapers, has been alleviated, the newspapers have raised their prices slightly in line with the general commercial principle of profit-making. The consequence has been that readers have become more fastidious in their selection of reading matter. The Central Committee survey brought to light the fact that the value of unsold papers in 1958 came to 1,500,000 rubles. Readers are no longer buying dailies which appear eight hours late—as did the Kiev *Pravda Ukrainy* on 15 days in the first quarter of 1959—and they are turning down the duller and more monotonous papers. This was the cloud on the horizon, no bigger than a man's hand, which cast a shadow over the journalists' congress. Despite rapid growth, the Soviet press ranks far below that of many other countries, including the Scandinavian countries, Iceland, Britain, France, and the United States, in number of copies sold per capita. It can no longer count on shortage of supply to guarantee continued growth. For the first time, the newspapers (rather than the distributors) have been made to bear the cost of unsold copies. In short, the Soviet press, even though a monopoly, confronts a test of popular interest. To meet the test, Soviet journalism is taking on new vigor of tone and style—and along with this, the ticklish problems of confining the changes to externals.

Leo Gruliow

(Mr. Gruliow is Editor of *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, published by Columbia University, New York. Presently on leave from the *Current Digest*, he is teaching in Geneva during the 1959-1960 academic year.)

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

The Peasants, the Party and the System, *by Arcadius Kahan*
Soviet Nationality Policy in Perspective, *by Alex Inkeles*
Communist Antisemitism, *by Erich Goldhagen*
Strains in the Sino-Soviet Alliance, *by Donald S. Zagoria*
"Right Opportunism" in China, *by Roderick MacFarquhar*
What Happened to "Communist Fronts"? *by Robert Bass*

Also reviews by: Lord Michael Lindsay, E. Stuart Kirby, Stephen Spender, Cyril Black, Myron Weiner, Gene D. Overstreet, Paul Willen, Michel Collinet, William C. Gaussmann.

NOTE: *The symposium presented in the last (January-February) issue under the title, "Toward a 'Communist Welfare State'?," has evoked a lively response from our readers. A number of letters have already been received—some critical, some complimentary, and some offering further information bearing on the topic of the symposium. We hope that more of our readers will be prompted to send comments. All correspondence relating to the symposium, together with a reply by Mr. Nove to criticisms of his lead article, will appear in the next issue of this journal.*

—The Editors

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